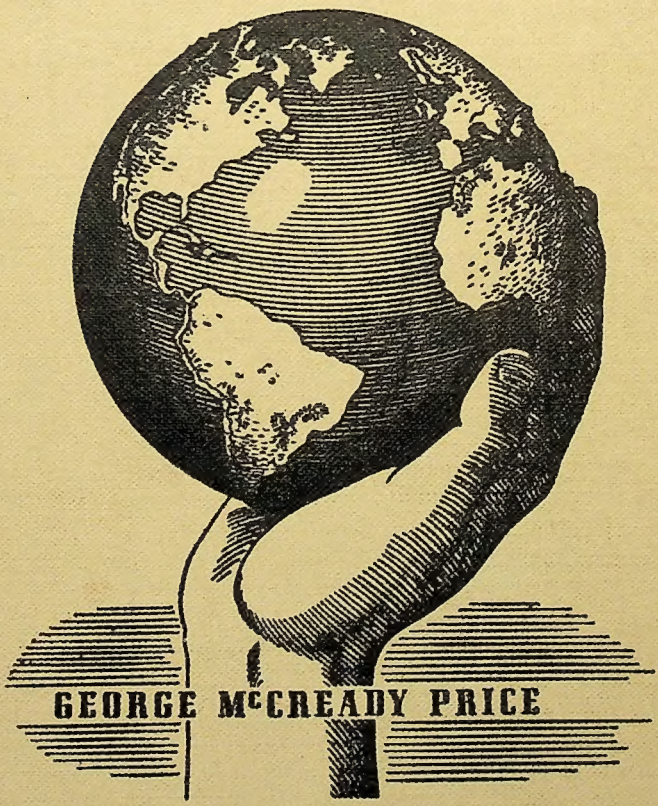
IF YOU WERE THE CREATOR



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PREFACE

IN spite of what is going on in the world there may still be some who "trust that somehow good will be the final goal of ill," and that "the great world's altar stairs . . . slope through darkness up to God," not downward to earth and ruin.

If such still live, they may not be unmindful of the final effort of an old man to counteract what Thomas Hardy called "the chronic melancholy which is taking hold of the civilized races with the decline of belief in a Beneficent Power."

Some who are old enough to remember the unbounded optimism of the nineteenth century, and who are now witnessing how the twentieth century is behaving in answer to this unreasoning optimism, will be reminded of Tennyson's pitiful question:

> For why is all around us here
> As if some lesser god had made the world,
> And had not force to shape it as he would?

But within some of us the conviction is as strong as ever that all will some day be right with the world, because God is still in His heaven. There are no crises, no emergencies with Him. It is a grotesque libel to suggest that a good God made a bad world, and now does not know what to do with it. God made only a good world; but this world went off on the primrose path of dalliance; so God had to allow it to degenerate physically and biologically. But soon this situation will all be remedied; for without shattering it to bits, as

the old Persian poet thought would have to be done, God will remold it to the perfection that His heart desires.

All this He has guaranteed; and although we cannot trace every step of the journey still to be taken, we can recognize the general direction, and the progress already made gives us confidence that the entire program will be completed on schedule time. We can apply to the world as a whole what Browning applied to one individual:

> I see my way as birds their trackless way.
> I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
> I ask not; but unless God send His hail
> Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
> In some time, His good time, I shall arrive:
> He guides me and the bird. In His good time.

This, I say, we are confident of concerning the world and God's program for it. "In His good time." But I do not flatter myself that this present little volume has solved all the difficulties connected with the problem of evil, suffering, and death. I know too well the vast intricacies of the subject; I am too conscious of the inescapable limitations of the human mind; I am constantly reminded of my own personal limitations in knowledge and in educational bias. I am more than willing to admit beforehand that this book must inevitably have many and serious defects. Yet the almost total lack of any such study on the part of others has impelled me to rush in where angels might well fear to tread, hoping that my rash attempt at pioneering may at least suggest for candid thinkers an affirmative answer to that age-old question: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

G. McC. P.

Pomona, California.

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Chapter I

SEEING THEM GO

The dark mystery of evil—sin, suffering, and death—has taxed the wisdom of all the wise. Why should these three tragedies prevail in a world made and run by a good God?

Numberless attempts have been made to solve the mystery. It is a matter of common observation that

> those infinitely privileged ones,
> Whose lives are padded, petrified, and pleasant,

have seldom accomplished much for the good of the world. A certain amount of difficulty and hardship may be admitted as good for all of us, the necessary steppingstones by which we may rise to higher things. But not *wrong* and *death*. Man's inhumanity to man not only makes countless thousands mourn, but it makes other thousands question whether a good God can be the author of such an evil world. The saddest words are not that it might have been otherwise in individual instances; but in the phrase of Bret Harte,

> More sad are these we daily see:
> It is, but hadn't ought to be.

Why does the Great Avenger continue so careless? Why is truth forever on the scaffold, and wrong continually enthroned in places of authority and power? Was Robert Ingersoll right in saying that human life is but "a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities," with no answer to our cry, except a wailing echo? Or should we

with Browning admit that the life of man is only a small arc, and that the future alone will reveal the perfect rounded whole?

Some of us are old enough to remember the unreasoning optimism which obsessed Europe and America up to the very eve of World War I. Even after the Armistice, many millions continued desperately to believe with Coué that every day in every way the world was getting better and better. Now, at long last, we have definitely outgrown that Pollyanna nonsense, and we wonder if there are any optimists left in a generation that is witnessing the collapse of civilization in another and greater world conflict.

At any rate, it is difficult to think that what is now occurring will lead many to join with Herbert Spencer in saying, "Evil perpetually tends to disappear." Or with Charles Darwin, who in the closing sentences of his *Origin of Species* declared: "Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of great length. And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress toward perfection."

> There is no more any prophet:
> Neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.
> Psalm 74:9.

Repeated disillusionments have damped the enthusiasm of those who have tried to get at the roots of this problem—the origin and cause of all our woe. But perhaps there is some better method of approaching the subject. Instead of standing aloof and blaming the Creator for all these evil conditions, why not turn the problem around, and ask whether the business of making a universe *could* be managed any better? Perhaps by this new method of approach, and

by following out the subject in some detail, we may discover the meaning of it all, and possibly by the discovery may

> put in every honest hand a whip
> To lash the rascals naked through the world.

If you could start from the very beginning, could you do a better job of creating and managing a universe? Can you think of a better method?

If you could plan everything from the beginning, and could have everything as you want it, you would have to make the *matter* of the universe, or the stuff of which it is composed. Then this stuff, or the chemical elements, would have no intractable properties, that is, no properties or tendencies of any kind which you did not put into them. Thus you could have no alibi on that score; for you could make the entire universe exactly as you wanted it.[1]

How would you plan it all?

The reader may think this an appallingly difficult job, this of creating an entire cosmic universe, composed of suns, and nebulae, and galaxies, each of these larger units being individually of very complex construction.

But we must not think of any physical or constructional "difficulties" for a Creator.

If you were the real Creator, you would merely have to *wish* or *speak* them into existence. *There is no other way.* The ancient Hebrews, with a very natural and expressive anthropomorphism, said that the Creator "spoke" all things into existence. All things, inorganic or organic, came into

[1] The theory of a limited or finite God, now so widely held, cannot stand close inspection. A semi-creator, one who is constantly hampered by the intractable properties of the material universe (which he did not create, but which he is trying to manage), is a most grotesque and irrational idea.

existence at His word, either on one occasion, or on successive occasions. Philosophically, too, this is the only rational view of a primary or direct creation.

Modern atomic physics seems inclined to explain the electrons, protons, neutrons, and photons which compose our universe as only so many "waves" or "pulses" of *energy*. This means merely that scientists find it easier to express, in their esoteric mathematics, the relationships between the parts of the universe in terms of "energy" rather than in terms of Newtonian mechanics. It does *not* mean that the components of the universe have any less an objective reality now than they did under Newton, Helmholtz, and Kelvin. We stultify all science and all knowledge if we listen to any clever juggling of words to persuade us that the universe does not have an objective reality which may be apprehended and studied by us.

But Jeans, Eddington, Compton, and many others among our men of science declare that there is no way to evade the fact of a real creation in which the original component stuff or elements of the universe were brought into existence at some time in the long ago. The universe is changing, and cannot have been always the same as now; yet it could never have arisen by chance out of its present ingredients. Says Jeans: "Everything points with overwhelming force to a definite event, or series of events, of Creation at some time or times, not infinitely remote."—*Eos*, page 55. By this primary or direct creation we mean the calling into existence of worlds or entities of any sort without the use of pre-existent materials.

There are great quantities of scientific evidence to prove that the elements composing the universe could not always have existed, nor could they have evolved out of anything

simpler. It is also contrary to both science and sound philosophy to look upon the chemical elements or the component stuff of the universe as offering any inertia or hindrance to what the Creator wished it to do or to become. Matter is not self-existent or eternal. It is a mere construct on the part of the Creator; hence it possesses no "properties" or "tendencies" which the Creator has not put into it. Accordingly, it is absurd to think of the elements as offering any hindrance to the power or will of the Creator, or to say that the One who made them cannot manage them in any way He chooses. Even the continued existence of matter must be entirely contingent upon the wish or will of God. He made it in the first place; and He can annihilate it or any part of it at His pleasure.

It is also very important to note that *time* is in no respect an important factor in this problem of creation. Neither how long ago this primary creation took place, nor yet how much time was occupied in it, is of the slightest logical importance. Later we shall consider the *revealed* truth that a certain amount of time was spent in the creation of this world and then in stocking it with plants and animals. After that the Sabbath was set apart for mankind to observe as a memorial of the facts of creation. But here we are dealing with the primary creation of the entire sidereal universe, which took place *long anterior* to the making of this world and its solar system; and I mean that time is not in any respect a factor in this primary creation. It is sufficient for our present purpose that every principle of sound philosophy and true science, to say nothing of religion, demands that there must have been at some time in the remote past this primary or direct creation of the stuff, or the chemical elements, composing the material universe. The discoveries of

modern physical science are now positively confirming this foundation truth of all philosophy and religion.

II

Possibly you may think it would be great fun to be able thus to call whole systems of worlds into existence, and then make a few millions of them smash together into one cosmic ruin and confusion. But this would be the thought of an untrained irresponsible mind, the prank of a child. The real Creator certainly does not act thus. The universe He has made is the most orderly and reliable of all things within our knowledge. All our standards of order and regularity derive from nature, from certain specific processes and recurrences of the cosmos. But nature is punctual and reliable because God Himself is reliable and eternally keeps faith with all His creatures. We are dangerously near idolatry when we talk and think of these regularities, these "laws of nature," as inhering in the things themselves, instead of being the result of the mind or will of the Creator.

What a workman puts into his work is a true expression, a sure index, of his own nature. Of course I do not necessarily include the work which a routine factory worker turns out. A man may stand in an assembly line and adjust some screws or put in a wheel, without having much opportunity to put his own character into the work he does. But I mean the really creative work of a free workman, who makes what he wants to make, and can make it exactly as he wants it to be. In such a case, the product thus made is a true expression of the mind and character of the one who makes it.

Leibnitz, the philosopher, argued that this is the best possible world. He had a difficult task to prove this to his readers,

in view of such nondesirable phenomena as sickness and death, not to mention earthquakes, tornadoes, and other catastrophes. But Leibnitz had in mind the very principle mentioned above, and thought that he had to defend the present order of things in all of its details, in order to clear the Creator's reputation for having it thus. But we do not have to assume that the universe is now as God made it, least of all should we assume that this world will always be very much as it is now. We shall see presently that there is a much better method of explaining this difficult problem of physical and moral evil. The old proverb says that children and fools judge work half-done; and it is vastly better for us to say that the universe may once have been perfect and ideal, and may again someday become perfect and ideal, though at present many parts of the cosmic machine seem to run far from smoothly, and we are often made to realize that the conditions of human life are not what they ought to be. But instead of judging a half-done work, might it not be better to say that perhaps the present condition of this corner of the universe with which we are acquainted may represent only a halfway stage in a truly good and wise divine plan for the universe as a whole?

Day will return with a fresher boon;
God will remember the world.
Night will come with a newer moon;
God will remember the world.
—*J. G. Holland.*

Of course it is a correct principle that we can judge the Maker of the universe from the kind of universe which He has made. But who knows that we really have enough facts about the universe in general to enable us to form an

intelligent opinion about it all? Our little systems of thinking along these lines

> have their day;
> They have their day, and cease to be.

Perhaps the universe is much more than a big machine. Perhaps it is primarily a moral economy, an ethical organization. If so, the moral exigencies of the cosmos will always take precedence over the merely physical, thus giving occasion for unusual happenings which we call "miracles," which are really occasions where moral principles and needs overrule the physical. And if the universe is primarily a moral economy, we need not think it strange if we have to make some allowances for some physical maladjustments which have come about since the beginning. Yet when we have taken all the available facts into consideration, we ought to be able to learn many of the fundamental traits of the Creator from studying His universe.

Only in modern times have men been in a position to know anything worth while about the general aspects of the universe. Previously men had learned many things about the earth in its superficial aspects, but not until the invention of such instruments as the spectroscope and the interferometer could we know much about the sidereal aspects of the cosmos as a whole. Until the discovery of radioactivity we could not really know anything worth while about the structure of matter. Scientists were all astray about such ordinary facts as heredity until Mendelism arose about forty years ago.

And there seemed clear evidence for the successive geological "ages," and thus for something like a development or evolution of life on the earth during immensely long pe-

riods of time, until the discovery, also about forty years ago, of conclusive evidence that this geological interpretation had been founded on mistakes. The many hundreds of examples of "deceptive conformities," in which great blocks of these geological "ages" are absent, and the scores of instances where these "ages" are reversed, were first pointed out by the present writer. These fossiliferous "ages" might properly be telescoped into one antediluvian age, with all the fossils regarded as having been overwhelmed and buried by the universal Deluge recorded in Genesis. But as the details of this evidence are buried in the dozen-odd books by the present writer which probably few of my present readers have ever seen, I shall not here try to cram this down their throats willy-nilly. I shall only ask them to assume for the time being that such an interpretation of the fossils is a scientific possibility, so I can proceed to show what a revolutionary effect this new view of the geological records must inevitably have upon all other aspects of our thinking about the problems of creation which are here under consideration.

The point I am trying to make is that all these modern discoveries tend to present the problems of the universe in aspects never dreamed of by the people of the Victorian age. Yet we see little inclination on the part of anyone to make serious use of these new discoveries in trying to understand the character of the Creator, or in attempting to study the ways in which He is conducting His universe. The now thoroughly discredited Victorian theories about the long-past history of the animals and plants are still taken for granted everywhere, while the more recently established doctrine of a literal creation is constantly ignored. Yet who can fail to see that these newly discovered scientific facts are of profound importance as *primary sources* in all fields of

theology and philosophy? Certain is it that many popular notions about God's methods of dealing with mankind must now become obsolete because they were based on mistaken ideas about the larger aspects of the universe.

The mere technical aspects of these modern revolutionary discoveries are interesting enough, and are engaging the attention of thousands of the keenest minds of our time. But vastly more important for the thinking of the world are the religious lessons which may now be learned from a reverent study of the facts about the universe. Especially is it incumbent on intelligent Christians of today to study out the moral and religious aspects of the Creator's relations with His created beings, and their obligations and relationships to Him, all of which profoundly important truths have now been opened up before us in ways that our forefathers never dreamed of and could not have appreciated.

If it is urged that the past efforts at reading religious lessons from nature have hitherto turned out to be unconvincing or fanciful, the answer is that those who made these previous attempts did not have at their command even a modicum of the facts which we now possess. The men of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries knew very little more about these matters than did the people of two thousand years ago. They and the men of the nineteenth century were further hampered by many false theories and traditions which led them even further astray.

We need not be alarmed or dismayed by these past failures. We now have a plethora of scientific facts at our command; if we can bring order out of the confusion, and if we are careful to make the right use of the facts available, we ought to make very considerable progress. We shall not solve all the puzzles; we cannot hope to avoid making some mis-

takes. But the Christian church of this fifth decade of the twentieth century is in duty bound to make intelligent use of all the increased knowledge now at its command, in the attempt to understand better what it means for men to have a Creator, and what the Creator's plans are for the present conduct and the future destiny of the race of mankind.

By some calm persistent thinking along these lines each of us may not only gain a better understanding of the most profound problems of the universe, but the knowledge thus gained may guide us

> on the long, long trail ahead
> That stretches upward toward the Great Divide.

III

We are embarking on a seemingly audacious enterprise when I ask you to try to imagine what it would be like to do the creating of the universe, and then to run it after it has been made and set in working order.

A spirit of reverence should always characterize any study we may make of such a subject as creation. God is our Creator, while we are but finite, mortal, and exceedingly fallible creatures. We are handicapped in our thinking by countless mental and spiritual limitations; we are grossly ignorant of so many of the vital factors involved in such a subject. And yet for us to study this problem of creation from the point of view of enlightened but reverent common sense is not necessarily absurd or profitless.

For every scientist must assume that nature is understandable by the human mind; else all his scientific study is foolishness. This means that our minds are constructed to run along lines somewhat similar to the thoughts of the Creator,

which we see stamped upon His created works. All this is clearly implied in the declaration of the Scripture that man was made in the image of God. If we as human beings can in some small measure understand the universe, we are thereby entitled to hope that we can similarly understand, partially and imperfectly, to be sure, the ethical ideals of the One who made all things. Accordingly, it is not so absurd after all for us to reverse this method of study, and to explore what a common-sense view of the case will yield us, when we try to think out how a creation ought to be conducted.

The same line of reasoning will lead us to see that the Mind behind the universe must have ethical and moral ideals. For we ourselves always have some such ideals; everyone has a standard of conduct. We have certain things that we like and certain things that we dislike in the character of our fellow men. In spite of many contradictory modern teachings, and many confusing factors in the long history of mankind, we can read the fact writ large over all the world of life, that the Mind behind all nature must be ethical and moral to a superlative degree. How absurd it would be to suppose that the Creator is not concerned with the conduct and the character development of His created intelligences. Accordingly, by putting ourselves in the imaginary position of doing the creating and the managing of the universe, it may turn out that we shall arrive at some facts and principles about the ethics of the universe which will prove eminently worth while.

As we start out on this tour of the scientific imagination and the reason, we are liable to make grave mistakes. All thinking involves this possibility, which is one reason why so many people do not like to think. Yet we have the natural world before us as a means of checking up on our reasoning.

We also have the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures, which claim to have been given mankind as a guide in some of the very facts and principles which we are seeking to discover or to confirm from reason and nature. If what our reason and our imagination tell us checks with scientific facts, and if both these results fit also into the teachings of Holy Writ, we shall acquire confidence that we are on the right road.

I do not feel called upon here to discuss the primacy among these three original sources of religious instruction: reason, nature, and the Scriptures. Far too often have Protestants been inclined to think of only *one* source of religious knowledge, ignoring the other two. But for hundreds of years—

> In the morning of the world
> When earth was nigher heaven than now,

men had no written Bible. Even today, whenever we get away from the madding crowd's ignoble strife, we may hear the still small voice speaking to us:

> For to be alone with silence is to be alone with God.

Men of science, on the other hand, long ago discarded the Scriptures as a reliable guide concerning the origin of the universe or origin of life; and the resulting antagonism between scientists and theologians is one of the sad conditions of our modern age. But in the study on which we are embarking we must assume that *all three* sources speak the same language; and we shall proceed only so far as they all agree. On the great problems of life and destiny, on all those subjects which are the special object of our present

study, these three primary sources of our knowledge of God and His ways must be in complete agreement, or we shall not feel satisfied with our results. As long as reason, nature, and the Bible unite in telling the same story, we ought to feel confident that we are reaching rock-bottom truth.

IV

Preliminary to any further progress, some of the dry bones of science need to be examined. Some of my readers may think these dry bones not at all interesting or attractive. However, a brief look at some of the foundation principles of natural science is absolutely essential before we are prepared to proceed further.

By astronomy our men of science have examined the larger aspects of the universe; by chemistry and atomic physics they have ferreted into the minute composition of the stuff of which the universe is composed; by the methods of biology they have studied the behavior of the living things which are scattered about over the face of the earth. But in the most distant stars we find the same chemical elements which are on this earth, and the laws of the correlation of forces and the conservation of momentum prove that all the various forms of "energy" are exactly interchangeable. With this consistent and complete unity pervading the entire universe, we are obliged to acknowledge one Master Mind behind it all. And if we reject the heresy of pantheism, we must confess that the Creator and Manager of the cosmos must be great beyond any human comprehension.

> The spacious firmament on high,
> With all the blue ethereal sky,
> And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
> Their great Original proclaim;

The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Doth his Creator's power display
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice or sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing, as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."

—*Joseph Addison.*

If you are to assume the role of creator, you will have to make yourself *directly* responsible for the whole thing, not only originally but now and all the time. I mean that you must not only start your universe going in the first place, but you must continue as the sleepless, ever-active manager of the entire cosmos. Some of the common phenomena of nature, such as "life," and the various forms of "action at a distance,"—gravitation, magnetism, and radiation in its many forms,—are clearly due to the direct control of God, with no possible intervening "second causes." But by the law of the conservation of energy we find that all other nat-

ural phenomena are exactly interchangeable with these forms of action at a distance, or the action of energy across absolutely vacant space. Hence we may rightly ignore the appearance of second causes, which come into the picture here and there, and we must say that God must be the *direct* cause of all. There can be no divided responsibility, and there is no room for anything like a modern theory of deism. The same Mind that wished the chemical elements into existence, must be the one who continues to manage all the electrons and protons of which our bodies are now composed. He has delegated a certain amount of *freedom* of action to living things, which thus become limited but true second causes; but outside of this limited, delegated power, the same Mind must still be in active control of the universe which created all things in the beginning.

Thus, at least as a matter of mental convenience on our part, we may recognize two methods for managing the scientific phenomena of the universe: the direct method, which is through fiat control, represented by such phenomena as gravitation and the other forms of action at a distance; and the indirect method, through the many forms of what we term second causes.

Similarly we may speak of two methods of creating, the direct and the indirect. If the reader is to do the creating, he will need to decide which method he will employ in each particular instance, and will need to decide on simple reasons of convenience and expediency. For it is evident that the Creator has used both methods, each method being adapted to the end in view.

By the *direct* method we mean the making of material things or entities of any kind by creative fiat or decree, without the employment of pre-existent materials. This is the

only conceivable method by which the stuff composing the material universe, or any part of the universe, such as our solar system, could have been brought into existence. Whether all the materials of the universe (outside our solar system) were created at one time, or on successive occasions, we have no direct knowledge; nor would the subsequent results differ in the least, so far as we can see. But whatever we may think about the theory of organic evolution, to talk about an evolution of the chemical elements is childish, unscientific nonsense. Our leading modern scientists are now acknowledging that the elements must have been created in this literal and direct way. This primary or direct creation of the stuff of the universe is what most people have in mind when they speak of a direct creation.

But there is no ground for withholding the name *creation* from other methods by which beings or entities are brought into existence. What else is it but an *indirect* creation by which human beings are now brought into existence? True, we call it natural law; for they come from parents like themselves, these in turn having been generated by other parents, and so on back to the beginning of the human race. If the first man arose from animal ancestors, then his beginnings were also indirect. For if man was made from the dust of the ground, as stated in the Hebrew Scriptures, without any animal predecessors, his creation was still partly indirect; for the dust of the ground was already in existence. Yet as this "dust" (the chemical elements) was not alive, the act of making it alive was a true act of direct creation; for no method of making life from the not-living is known at the present time, either naturally or by experimental science. Thus we may say that the creation of the first man was partly direct and partly indirect, depending upon the way we look

at the matter. The origin of all subsequent human beings has always been by an indirect creation, when we consider them as separate individuals. But since the fundamental processes of life must always be under the direct management of the Creator, it is nothing short of a real creation (albeit *indirect)* by which a new human being is today brought into existence.

Thus we may rightfully speak of a direct creation, and an indirect creation, as we have already spoken of the similarly direct and indirect methods of managing the universe after it has been brought into existence. Fundamentally, of course, both the origin of the universe and its complete management in every particular must be due to the wish or decree of God. But the Bible makes a sharp distinction between creation and the present management of the universe; for it represents creation as a completed work, and not now going on. And it will conduce to mental clearness, and will enable us to avoid the two opposite heresies of deism and pantheism, if we consider in further detail what we mean by some of these terms.

By the *direct* or fiat method of managing the universe, I mean all such processes of nature as cannot possibly be assigned to any conceivable material cause. Among such nonmaterial methods of conducting the universe are gravitation, electrical attraction, cohesion, magnetism, and all the other *pulls* or the phenomena of attraction. Gravitation, as an example of the rest, takes place across vacant space; it is genuine action at a distance; and no materialistic "explanation" is worth the serious attention of truth-loving men.

The theory of an "ether" pervading all space was the last-ditch stand of the materialists. When they were driven from this by the Michelson-Morley series of experiments,

Einstein and his followers invented certain forms of mathematics by which they profess to "explain" gravitation and these other forms of action at a distance. By assigning new and changed meanings to such terms as "space," "time," and "field," and a few others, and by making their esoteric "space" take the place of the "ether" and thus become the activating force of the entire universe, they can lead many to think that the phenomena of nature have been "explained" without any personal God.

But all this is a most confusing and reprehensible practice. For it is being done in the interests of a pantheistic theory of the universe, as Einstein himself clearly shows in his recent request that "teachers of religion must have the stature to give up the doctrine of a personal God."—*Science News Letter*, Sept. 21, 1940.

Graphs and equations, no matter how clever, should never be allowed to become substitutes for clear thinking. But this they do whenever they befool us into thinking that any mathematical statement of *how* the bodies of the universe behave can give us any true insight into *why* they thus behave. For mathematics is only a form of logic; and, like all other forms of logic, we can get out of it only what we put into it. No mathematical statement of the behavior of the universe can tell us why it is acting thus and so.

Everyone conversant with the subject knows that modern physics and astronomy have about given up trying to "explain" gravitation and the other forms of "attraction." Typical of many other statements is the following from E. P. Lewis of the University of California: "We do not know, nor can we ever expect to know, the mechanism of gravitation." And an equivalent statement from Sir Joseph Larmor of England: "No progress has been made, any more than in

Newton's day, in unraveling the essential nature of gravitation." To say, as the disciples of relativity do, that, while gravitation cannot be explained in any mechanical or material way, it is one of the most fundamental properties of matter, in the relation of the latter to space and time, is merely to throw a smoke screen of ambiguous words over the real problems of nature to keep us from recognizing the direct action of a personal God.

Similar remarks might be made regarding the modern ways of "explaining" radiation in terms of "photons," or pulses of pure free energy.

The method of maintaining all the various forms of *life* seems also to belong to this direct or fiat-control type of divine management. It is hopeless to try to explain life in mechanistic terms. Also it is one of the bedrock facts of science that living things cannot start from the not-living, and have never been observed to start thus *de novo* either in nature or in the laboratory by any hocus-pocus of chemistry or physics. The origin of life in the first place must obviously be classed as a direct creation; and it ought to be equally evident that the methods of now maintaining or managing all living cells, which are the units of life, are also of this direct type.

A common thing is a grass blade small,
Crushed by the feet that pass;
But all the dwarfs and giants tall,
Working till doomsday shadows fall,
Can't make a blade of grass.

The ways in which new units of life are now multiplied may seem to some persons as *indirect,* since they always arise from other living things already existing, and are not

created *de novo*. In reality, however, these methods of multiplying units of any particular type are not of importance to the present line of argument. For as we look at this multiplication from the standpoint of the behavior of the cells, we see that this splitting off of a sperm or an ovum from the parent stock is not essentially different from ordinary growth by means of cell multiplication. The new individual always starts by breaking away as a living unit or units from a similar individual already existing, which makes its origin indirect, so far as the divine management is concerned. And yet, behind all this, the entire process of life itself in its very essence can be accounted for only as a direct activity of the sleepless Mind behind all nature.

These diverse processes which we have classed as obviously due to the direct activity of God, comprise a large proportion of the total phenomena of the universe. The indirect methods of nature not thus included would be those phenomena which can be assigned to true second causes, chiefly those which are produced by free-acting beings. For all living beings, including angels, men, and, to a certain extent, animals, have this power of becoming genuine causes, in the sense that they can originate movement or action among inanimate objects. By common usage also we extend the idea of second causes to such phenomena as the falling of water on a turbine, with the consequent turning of a wheel which may grind corn or saw wood or perform some other purely mechanical work. All those processes of nature which result from direct physical contact in the nature of "pushes" would be here included.

Some of my readers may suggest that the water wheel above might be used to turn a dynamo, thus generating electricity, which being transmitted to a distant station is trans-

formed into light or heat, or may be used to run a motor or do other mechanical work. Such a series is often spoken of as a train of second causes. However, in these examples many complications arise; for the transmission of electricity might be disputed as belonging to the direct-control methods mentioned above, depending upon what we think about the nature of electricity. Certainly the radiation of light and heat must come under the direct class.

Instead of being too finical about our human attempts to classify the phenomena of nature in this way, it is infinitely more important for us to remember that any of the processes which we have classified as direct *may on occasion become transformed over into any other process which we might class as indirect,* without gain or loss of amount, in accord with the profound law of the conservation of energy. From which it follows inevitably that even those processes which we class as due to second causes must in reality be brought closely under the immediate or direct control of the Eternal. Probably, if we but knew all the facts, we might say that all our attempts to classify the phenomena of nature in this way are only childish human devices for our mental convenience, but with little or no justification in the larger view of the universe.

In short, it is only a statement of sober fact to say that modern scientific study forces us to the rigid alternative: Either God is far more directly active in nature, and carries on the multifarious natural phenomena in a far more literal fashion than most persons suppose; or else nature is merely a great self-running machine and needs no God at all. For modern educated people there is no other possible choice.

And all this means that modern scientific discoveries have either demonstrated the truth of rank materialism, or they

have given us such a clear and gigantic *reductio ad absurdum* of materialism that it amounts to a positive demonstration of theism. And truth-loving men and women will have no hesitation in choosing between these two. For in the last analysis I do not suppose that any person ever adopts materialism unless in his heart of hearts he *wishes* to have it that way. The will to believe or to disbelieve is after all the governing factor in life.

To the thoughtful and reverent mind the discoveries of modern chemistry, physics, and astronomy, to say nothing of those of biology, bring us clear and cogent messages concerning the majesty and the wisdom of the Creator and Manager of the universe.

Perhaps only as a matter of mental economy or convenience, we may still distinguish two types of creation: direct or fiat creation, and indirect or mediate creation. Similarly we recognize two types of control in the management of the universe: direct or fiat control, and indirect or mediate control. The latter method is often spoken of as that of second causes.

No other methods in either case are possible or conceivable. They cover all the examples that we know, and all that we can imagine as possible.

But it is evident that the entire program of the universe must have been thought out beforehand. Otherwise there would be physical inconsistencies, or maladjustments, on a cosmic scale of the component parts of the universe. But there is absolutely no proof of the slightest maladjustment of any sort outside of this earth. Here on this earth, it is true, we have many physical irregularities, such as tornadoes, devastating floods, and earthquakes, to say nothing of sickness, old age, and death. But as we shall see later, these

maladjustments, or what we may term physical evils, are very readily accounted for on *moral grounds,* or as being due to God's having changed somewhat His dealings with this world to fit the moral revolt now existing among the inhabitants of this earth. If a cosmic rebellion now prevails among God's free-acting intelligences on this earth, it would be quite unreasonable to expect God to maintain all the environment of the rebels, and all the processes of nature in contact with them, in the same perfect and harmonious condition which was entirely suitable before the revolt began.

It may be easy for us to exaggerate the degree and the extent of the physical evil now existing, especially if, as I firmly believe, there is no such physical evil outside of this little home of man that we term the earth—or at least no proof of physical evil outside of our solar system.

> Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
> Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.
> —*Alexander Pope.*

In spite of many astronomical speculations, there is absolutely no evidence worthy of the name that physical evil in any such form extends beyond this little corner of God's universe. Certainly for us to attribute the discords with which we are here acquainted to something intrinsic in nature itself, inhering in the elemental stuff of which the universe is composed and extending universally throughout the entire cosmos—for us to say this, is to say that this elemental stuff is independent of God and really was not created by Him. As one author has said, "To erect matter into an eternal *thing,* independent of the Almighty but forever beside Him, is the most revolting of all theories." This

is an old pagan notion, utterly contrary to Christianity; but it has nothing in either reason or science to support it.

But I am assuming that you, as the creator, actually made the entire universe, made the very elements of which the universe is composed. In that case, of course, you could have everything exactly as you wished it to be. If there should be anything in the running of the stars, or in the behavior of the electrons and protons that should turn out not as you planned, it could be so only because you had not wisely planned all the details in advance. But surely it is highly improper on our part to charge the real Creator with clumsiness or lack of wise foresight; for the astonishing adjustments and harmonies which we do see on every hand must inevitably convince us of His wisdom. In common fairness we ought to give such a being the benefit of the doubt in the presence of any seeming disharmony or physical evil which we may happen upon.

I am speaking now only of the "dead," or nonorganic, aspects of the universe, those aspects which come within the purview of chemistry, physics, and astronomy. I am not now attempting to deal with the moral perplexities arising from the conduct of human beings, nor with the suffering and death associated with human life or with animal life. These matters will be considered in the proper place in our study.

I am here only insisting on the obvious truism that you, as the real creator, can have everything in your physical universe exactly as you wish. If there is anything arising in the behavior of matter, either in its subatomic form or in its form of worlds and stars and galaxies, which is not exactly as you desire, it must be your own fault. For you have had an absolutely free hand. No difficulties or hindrances due

to the supposed "properties" of anything at all can ever be adduced as an alibi.

Not only must the making of the entire universe be your responsibility alone; you must be as fully responsible for its entire and continuous management. Whether you employ the direct or fiat-control method of managing the electrons and the stars, or whether you choose for one reason or another to use partly indirect methods, or what we term second causes, is entirely dependent upon you, it is wholly your affair. You can do exactly as you choose; and the results in each and every case must be what you have planned. Nothing otherwise is possible or conceivable. The being who acted first as the creator must forever afterward be also the sole manager of the entire universe.

I sing the mighty pow'r of God
That made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad,
And built the lofty skies;
I sing the wisdom that ordained
The sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at His command,
And all the stars obey.

. . . . .

There's not a plant or flow'r below
But makes Thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
By order from Thy throne.
Creatures that borrow life from Thee
Are subject to Thy care;
There's not a place where we can flee
But God is present there.

—*Isaac Watts.*

From all this we see the childish absurdity of deism. Any philosophy which tends in even the slightest degree to represent the Creator as a great absentee, one who set the worlds running and left them to run on through certain endowed or resident "properties," taking little or no interest in them thereafter, would have been incredible even without our modern scientific knowledge of atomic physics and chemistry and biology. In the light of what we now know of the facts of the universe, any form of deism is grotesque beyond endurance.

At this stage of our study I believe that everyone must acknowledge that the Creator and Manager of the cosmos must be great and wise and powerful beyond any human comprehension.

Whether you as the creator are also a being to be admired and loved, whether you are such as can inspire devoted loyalty to yourself on the part of all the intelligent beings that you have created, will depend upon the ethical methods which you employ in dealing with these free-choosing, intelligent beings.

To the consideration of these problems we must now address ourselves.

Chapter II

BECOMING THE GREAT COMPANION

But electrons and molecules, worlds and nebulae and island universes, are not enough. They may be grand and glorious. It may be a delight to watch them move, an aesthetic joy to study their complicated movements, a symphonic ecstasy to watch how they all synchronize and interact. But every intelligent being—and this is doubtless true also of God Himself—must always be more interested in fellowship with other intelligent beings. We can have no communion or companionship with worlds and universes, even though we may be interested in watching them travel through the regions of space.

In your role as creator you would naturally want to make intelligent beings with whom you could have personal dealings and reciprocal relationships. This does not necessarily mean equality, nor anything approaching it. But it does mean intelligence, and it must also mean moral freedom or free will. Nothing in the nature of friendship or companionship is conceivable without both these endowments.

You decide to create some beings who can think and reason, who can enjoy the beautiful and wonderful things around them in your universe, and who can also understand you as their creator, and who are capable of showing affectionate loyalty to you and your system of creatorship.

So be it.

But remember, you must supply these new beings with absolutely everything they are to have or to become. You must not only supply the material parts of their organic

machines, but must also keep supplying them with all their motive power (either directly or indirectly), and must everlastingly keep supplying this energy for them as long as they exist, or as long as you want them to exist. For whenever this supply of energy ceases, the living beings will also cease. Every living thing that has been created can die; and it inevitably must die, whenever the Creator's life-sustaining energy ceases or is withdrawn.

The popular notion of an immortal "soul," sometimes spoken of as a spark of divinity, something that can never die and that God Himself cannot put out of existence, is not a genuine scientific or philosophic concept, any more than a Biblical one. To me it sounds very much like sheer nonsense. You as the creator would not be so unwise as to start something that you could not stop. This fiction of an intrinsically immortal "soul" is similarly nonsensical when measured up by the Bible or by any rational theology. God, of course, can give any of His beings endless life; He has promised to do this for all those who are loyal to Him. But if any created beings are ever to become immortal, their immortality can never become inherent in themselves, but must always and forever be solely due to the never-ceasing supply of divine energy. In other words, it is unthinkable that any creature can ever outgrow his absolute dependence upon his Creator.

You may say, "All this is very fine, for whenever I don't like any of these beings that I have made, I can stop supplying them with motive power. And then they will cease to exist; they will become as though they had not been. Is it not fair and reasonable that I, their creator, should be able to decide how long I want them to exist? Then why should I endow any of them with immortality beforehand, or until

I know exactly what sort of beings they are going to become? If I don't want a set of rebels on my hands who are already immortal and whom I cannot liquidate if I see fit, why should I give any of them the power of immortal life until I have become satisfied that they will never abuse this gift?"

Common sense tells us that the Creator need not grant any of His beings endless life until He tests them and sees that He is willing to have them live in His universe throughout eternity. In this way He can plan so that no rebels will ever get beyond His control.

All this looks simple and easy. In reality, the creation of any beings with the endowment of free moral choice is a dangerous procedure. We are to study some of the perils involved. But this idea of summarily doing away with some of them that you do not like is even more childish than the suggestion of the former chapter, that it might be fun to watch a number of worlds smash up into smithereens. Both are silly, childish fancies. Any such notions could be seriously entertained only by untrained, undisciplined minds.

II

True, you must supply all the life energy which your created beings are to possess, and whenever you cease to supply this energy, they will all cease to exist. You will not even have to take the trouble to "kill" them; when you stop keeping them alive, they will fade away out of the picture.

You must supply all the materials of which their bodies (if they are to have bodies) are composed. And you must also supply whatever they consist of, if they are what we, for lack of any better name, call "angels" or "spirits." You must also supply (or plan for) whatever capacity they are to have for thinking and acquiring knowledge, for appreciat-

ing the beautiful, for discriminating right from wrong, for loving the good and the true. All such capacities or abilities must be provided for beforehand, as architects and builders have to plan for the electrical installations in their buildings.

But all this implies that you must also plan for all the capacity for pain and misery of which these beings are to be capable. Of course you can make whatever plans you like; for you are their absolute creator, and you can endow them with whatever capacities and potentialities you choose. But your laws for the control and guidance of intelligent, morally responsible beings must always be in accordance with all the other rules or laws for the government of the rest of the universe. I mean that the two sets of rules must not be in antagonism or conflict. Your rules for the government of "good" or loyal beings must also be exactly comparable with those governing "wicked" beings or rebels—in case you find such beings on your hands later as the result of giving all beings freedom of choice. It will never do for you to have one set of laws for one class and another set (either easier or more difficult) for the other. Nothing but absolute and impartial justice and rightness could endure the close inspection to which all your conduct will be subjected among the multitudes to whom you give absolute freedom of choice.

But when you plan for these contingencies, you must also think of all the effects which these capacities for enjoyment or misery on the part of some will have upon the others. In other words, you must have in mind all the social and even cosmic interrelationships thus made possible, or indeed inevitable. But not only must all the reciprocal possibilities of pleasure and pain among your beings be provided for; you must not forget the reflex effects of all these conditions upon yourself as their creator.

For whenever any of your creatures are happy, a certain reflex or vicarious happiness will return to you. The human parent is happy when he sees his children enjoying life.

But the converse of this is fully as true. For whenever any of your beings are unhappy, even because of their own wrongdoing, their misery and pain cannot fail to reach back to you as their creator. Are you prepared to go this far?

If you are not, you are in no way fit to become a creator.

The real Creator must have faced all these possibilities. He must have fully realized beforehand all the inevitable pain and anguish which suffering and misery among so many of His creatures would bring to Himself. And when we look at the history of the human race for the past few thousand years, it is clear that the Creator must already have had sufficient experience of what this reflex suffering means. Yet we are obliged to say that all the minutest details of the entire history of the human race must have been taken into account before any of the work of creating this world was entered upon. No other method is conceivable, if the work of managing this world and the human race now populating it were to be carried on in a sensible and successful manner. It is quite futile for anyone to say that we cannot understand or comprehend all this even as a possibility. Of course not. For how can any mere created being hope to comprehend fully any single aspect of the infinite Creator?

F. W. Faber has tried to express some of the larger aspects of the Creator in the following well-known lines:

> There's a wideness in God's mercy,
> Like the wideness of the sea;
> There's a kindness in His justice,
> Which is more than liberty.
>
> . . . . .

For the love of God is broader
  Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
  Is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple,
  We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be all sunshine
  In the sweetness of our Lord.

III

Yet we have undertaken to think out as much of these matters as our finite minds will comprehend. And it will now be in order for my reader to decide what kind or kinds of beings he is to create first.

Some of my readers will probably think of human beings as the first ones to be created. But there are certain reasons (to be explained later) why this would not be the best method of beginning. Moreover, all the known facts prove clearly that this was not the way in which God began His creation of moral intelligences.

The real creation evidently started with what the Scriptures term angels or spirit beings. We do not know very much about the nature or the characteristics of these spirits or angels. All heathen peoples, and many modern people who consider themselves intelligent Christians, have the notion that these angels or spirits are the disembodied ghosts of dead human beings. But all well-instructed persons, whether Catholics or Protestants, know that this view cannot be true. No; they are not the disembodied spirits of dead people; for there are clear records of their existence long before any human beings had died. A great multitude of other facts also would make this popular notion wholly

impossible. It is also a serious mistake to deny their existence.

According to the Bible, the real angels or spirits are a distinct order of beings who were created by God before the creation of man. When we seek to find out why God made these angels first, we are, I think, able to reach a very reasonable and satisfactory answer. This answer will be found in the methods to be employed in handling the problem of sin.

We have seen that the real Creator must have carefully thought out the entire plan of all His work of creation, before He took even the initial steps in the enterprise. My reader, who is assuming the role of creator, would find out sooner or later that the great cosmic problem of morals could best be demonstrated before the universe by means of the long-drawn-out process of *indirect* creation, where the natural results of moral evil would develop and show their hideous forms in many successive generations of human beings. Among spirit beings, who seem to have been all created directly at one time, and among whom no such processes of biological reproduction (or indirect creation) take place, there obviously could not be the same opportunities for illustrating the natural or logical results of moral evil. The real Creator evidently saw that it would be best to allow evil to arise first among the angels, and then to allow this moral problem to be transferred to this earth, where the career of the human race might be made to serve as a prolonged objective demonstration of the intrinsic evil results following in the wake of rebellion.

I am here using the word "allow" in its elemental sense; but hasten to disclaim an additional meaning which might seem to imply some collusive participation on the part of God either in the origin or the spread of moral evil. God did allow sin to arise, in the sense that He did not head it

off and make it impossible. But we must not say that God connived at the beginnings of sin, nor that He connived with the rebel angels in their nefarious work of seducing mankind. In Milton's classic passage, the Creator is represented as saying:

> If I foreknew,
> Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
> Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.

The same principle holds true here. Without implying the slightest responsibility on God's part for the origin or spread of sin, it is a simple statement of fact that God did without any liability permit sin to arise, and did also permit it to spread as it has done. Language is at best a clumsy medium for conveying thought; and it is most obviously inadequate when we mortals attempt to express the mental processes and motives of Deity.

We as finite beings have to learn by trial and experimentation. God is under no such necessity. He had already thought out all eventualities beforehand. Yet the only way in which He can educate His creatures is by having them learn by experience and by observation, the latter being a sort of vicarious experience. Thus while God Himself knew beforehand all about the evil results of sin and rebellion, the best way in which the value of justice and truth and goodness could be brought home to all His created beings so as to become a permanent part of their very natures, would be for the entire universe to see an objective demonstration of the working out of these antagonistic principles side by side on a grand, a cosmic scale. This one sad experience with a moral rebellion could become so effective as an object lesson as to ensure that no such experimenting with evil will ever be indulged in by any other created beings.

Since all this demonstration could best be worked out by means of the process of biologically produced human beings through a prolonged period of time, we have here the reason why, humanly speaking, God created mankind *after* He had created many angels and spirits.

IV

But right here we need to remember that there are certain things that even an almighty Creator cannot do. He can do anything that is a matter of mere power; but even God cannot do self-contradictory things, or things that are contrary to His own nature. He cannot make two and two equal three; He cannot make events which have occurred not take place; He cannot lie; He cannot be unjust or unreasonable. Such contingencies are not matters of power; they are inconsistent with God and with the principles of the universe which He has made. He might justly say: "I dare do all that may become a God; who dares do more is none."

These considerations may help us in trying to understand the proper methods of dealing with free, moral beings. Even God cannot make wrong to be right; He cannot make happiness and blessing come from hatred and disregard of His established principles.

God could, of course, have prevented all the beginnings of sin. But His universe would not then have been founded on freedom and moral responsibility. There would have been no real freedom, no moral responsibility, on the part of the beings He had made. They would have been mere machines, mere automata. He already had plenty of these: the atoms and the molecules, the stars and the galaxies, all are absolutely obedient to His will. But they obey without

thinking; they have never learned that it is always best to obey; they have never learned to love to do the will of the great heavenly Father.

God wanted to have something more than mere machines, beings who would love as well as obey, creatures capable of intelligent appreciation of Himself and His works, intelligences with whom He could hold fellowship and communion.

But He could have such beings only by allowing them the possibility of genuine moral choice or free will. And this must also involve the possibility of sin, of mutiny, of rebellion.

There could be no other way.

Perhaps we need not have expected anything better from Omar Khayyam, the ancient Persian pessimistic poet; but he certainly proved himself only a superficial thinker when he wrote:

> Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this Sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
> Remold it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

With every passing century and millennium, it becomes more and more evident that the Creator has been wise and beneficent from the very beginning; and that by no possible way could He have planned the universe better, if He were to create millions of free-choosing beings, capable of loving loyalty, but also capable of revolt and rebellion.

V

With all these contingencies before you as the creator, you have now to choose whether you are to do your creating

directly, by mere fiat; or whether you will first create certain primary beings, and then allow them to go on producing others like themselves by "natural law," which is what we have called *indirect* creation. Each is a good method; each is a perfectly legitimate method. From the Scriptures we learn that the angels were made by the first method, and all of mankind, except the first man and woman, by the second. But why the direct method in the first instance, and the indirect in the second?

Many of the most profound problems of the universe are involved in the answer.

As all the human beings that we have ever known have been made by the indirect, or biologic method, it may not seem a question of any practical importance whether this method has always been employed by the Creator in producing men and women. But it certainly would have made all the difference in the world to the *first* man whether he were started sinless, with no mental or physical bias toward evil, or were developed up through a horrible struggle for existence from some of the lower animals, with the Nessus' shirt of depraved animalism clinging to him, so that from the very beginning he could not possibly keep from going wrong.

Whether the first man was started sinless by means of the direct method of creation, or was started with the handicap of depravity by development from animal ancestors, would also make a vast difference *to the onlooking universe.* And you as the creator must never forget that some day all the events of the entire history of the universe will have to be opened up for the inspection of all intelligent beings. At that time your methods, as the responsible creator, must be such as will stand rigid inspection and criticism. All your ways must be fair and just. How could you justly hold

the first man to be morally accountable if you had not given him a fair start, if you had brought him into existence under such an atrocious moral handicap?

The reader may retort that all people are now born with such a handicap of evil heredity. This is partly true; but two wrongs do not make one right. We do not solve one problem by raising another.

However, the Christian plan of salvation explains the second of these problems, but not the first. It tells us that all the handicap of evil with which men are now born is more than neutralized by the special help of Jesus Christ. If we will permit Him, Christ will enable us to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies toward evil. We may crudely illustrate the situation by supposing that we are all born in a hole or a pit. Christianity explains that Jesus will pull every one of us out of the pit, if we will only permit Him. But it does not explain how our first ancestor got into the pit, unless he deliberately jumped into it of his own free choice.

If we come back to the supposition that you are doing the creating, you will be faced with the problem of the making of the first man. For a first man there will have to be, whether the human race is to be made indirectly by evolution from some of the lower animals, or is made directly, out of hand, as described in Genesis. On the latter supposition, man is created sinless and with no bias toward evil. On the first supposition, man comes into existence after many millions of years of bloody struggle for existence and survival by the most cunning and most bloodthirsty ancestors, and he brings with him all their evil heredity. But this would mean that the blame for all the sin and evil among mankind would have to rest with you as the creator. There

is no possible way to evade this horrible responsibility, unless you make the first man sinless, with neither physical nor mental bias toward evil.

The problem of whether human beings are *now* born without a fair start is very different from that of *whether the first human being did not have a fair start.* If you were acting as the creator, you would be under moral obligation to the onlooking universe to start the first human beings in a sinless state, without the slightest bias toward evil. If they go astray, it may then become a problem with you whether you are to permit them to go on reproducing other sinners or degenerates like themselves. In common justice and fairness you could permit them to go on reproducing other depraved beings *only* if you provide some adequate means for rescuing their descendants from this depraved condition. But this is a very different problem from that of the making of the first man. There can be no possible excuse for you to make the *first* man with an original evil bias, as is involved in the theory that the first man evolved from animal ancestors. Nothing could justify the latter method before the intelligent universe; accordingly, we have a right to conclude that the theory of man's origin by this evolutionary process cannot be true.

Charles Lamb spoke of one of his literary contemporaries, S. T. Coleridge, as "an archangel a little damaged;" while W. S. Gilbert declared:

> Darwinian man, though well behaved,
> At best is only a monkey shaved.

These are the two alternative ideas concerning the origin of the human race. Benjamin Disraeli, when confronted with this alternative, declared that he was on the side of the

angels. We may allow something for the whimsicality of the alternative, as stated above; yet we have here the two theories, man as a fallen being in contrast with man as a rising being. We are here not looking at the other implications of these two theories, as they affect our ideas of man's present condition or his future. We are here concerned only with the very different characters of the Creator thus revealed. And if the reader thinks he can admire or love a creator who would deliberately make the first man via the animal route, and then punish him even by the laws of cause and effect for living according to his animal heredity, he may as well throw this book down and read no farther. For nothing that I can write regarding these problems can possibly please him. That is certainly not the kind of creator that I am writing about.

VI

Let us now return to the primary subject of the present chapter. You are confronted with the problem of how you can make intelligent beings who will be capable of enjoying the universe you have made, capable of companionship with you and with one another, capable of getting along with one another in peace and good will, capable of loving loyalty toward you and your plans for running the universe. And we have seen that these ends can be accomplished by allowing absolute moral freedom to the beings you have made.

This freedom of moral choice must be a reality, not a mere make-believe. You as the creator must supply all the physical energy and all the mental capacity of your beings; you may even mark off in many ways the strict bounds of what they can do and what they cannot; you may hedge

them around, through what we term "natural law," with all manner of restrictions and sheer impossibilities. Yet you must allow them genuine moral freedom within these bounds, which means *freedom to do wrong as well as right.* Not by the slightest may you ever coerce this sacred moral freedom; never may you even appear to compel your creatures to choose your service, your methods of life, rather than those of mutiny and rebellion. It may even be advisable for you to seem indifferent or almost careless of the choices which your creatures make. Of course you cannot really be indifferent to the sad consequences which must always follow their wrong choosing. But for the sake of your own future reputation as a just and impartial ruler of the universe, you cannot afford to exercise any coercion or restraint upon the moral choices of your creatures.

But your care to allow them moral freedom must not hinder you from doing what you can to educate them along the lines of moral development, and to wean them away from evil in all its forms. Not alone will you shape conditions for every life in such a way as to prepare each one for the place in life which you desire him to fill. Shakespeare recognized this in the familiar lines:

> There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Roughhew them how we will.

The young lawyer-poet, William Cullen Bryant, also recognized the need of divine guidance in the well-known lines:

> He who, from zone to zone,
> Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
> In the long way that I must tread alone,
> Will lead my steps aright.

But with your intimate and direct control over all the phenomena of nature and of human history, there will be a thousand ways in which you can, through what men heathenishly call the "chance" circumstances of life, provide for their training and education in character development in exactly those ways in which they most need it, even though throughout all this training they constantly have the opportunity of rejecting and rebelling against these providential circumstances of their lives. As George Herbert remarked, the common duties of life, if faithfully performed, will uplift both the doer and the thing done:

> Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
> Makes that and th' action fine.

As an example of revolt against God's providence in everyday life, we may take the words of W. E. Henley, written in a Scottish hospital while awaiting a severe surgical operation:

> Under the bludgeonings of chance
> My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Here we have the shrieking defiance of a typical rebel against God, who is determined not to acknowledge that anything more than impersonal "chance" has to do with the events of our lives. The Creator has always had such people to deal with, men who defiantly insist on managing themselves, in spite of everything that God can do for them.

> It matters not how strait the gate,
> How charged with punishments the scroll,
> I am the master of my fate:
> I am the captain of my soul.

These defiant words of braggadocio against Providence have been praised by men who should have known better. Those who understand more clearly the basic principles in this whole problem of God's dealing with His intelligent creatures will be more inclined to say with Tennyson:

> Strong Son of God, immortal Love, . . .
> Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

This important principle of free will must govern many of your dealings with mankind. Since you have also myriads of spirit beings as well as mankind to deal with, and since good and bad are found among both classes, it will be important for you to decide how much freedom of communication you are going to permit between the angels and the humans. In common fairness you will hardly be able to give unlimited access to mankind on the part of the good spirits, unless you also allow similar freedom of access to mankind on the part of the evil ones. This may make it necessary to limit within strict bounds the freedom of access between spirits and human beings; with the result that the real problems of man will seem to be largely of his own planning and doing; though in reality you and the loyal angels will necessarily be deeply concerned or even intimately connected with everything that human beings may do, whether it be good or bad.

The reasons why you will find it advisable to restrict the free and open dealings between angels and human beings will appear when we consider the difficulties which men and women must always experience in discriminating between the good spirits and the bad ones. In the very nature of things, it must forever be impossible for men and women to know anything of the previous records or the individual

histories of the spirits which come to them, as they may in the case of human beings, judging the latter accordingly. The good and the bad among the angels can be distinguished only by their fruits, by comparing what they teach or do with the recognized standards already known from the Bible or from other sources of divine knowledge. Hence for you to admit free and visible access by the good and evil spirits to the people of this earth would only add another element of utter confusion to human life.

I pitied him in his blindness;
But can I boast, "I see"?
Perhaps there walks a spirit
Close by who pities me.

You will probably work matters out about as follows: In the early days of mankind you will permit more or less of direct communication between the good spirits and the few men and women then existing. As time passes, however, you will develop a set of written instructions for the guidance of the race; and more and more your dealings with them will take on the appearance of impersonality, the reign of natural laws and natural processes.[1] However, among backward peoples, and among the ignorant of all times and places, you may find it advisable to deal more directly by means of visible manifestations and physical wonders or "miracles." Yet whatever you permit in this way on the part of your good spirits, you would seem obliged to permit

[1]Perhaps it would be more strictly accurate to say that God probably never intended to shut Himself off from the human race, but that the giving of instruction to man through prophets and the Scriptures is God's best method of communicating now with the race under the conditions of sin. Sin has made a moral barrier; and were the Creator to reveal Himself to any human being directly, the result could only be the ruin and destruction of the sinner. "For our God is a consuming fire."

also on the part of the rebel spirits. And then, since all angels are beings quite superior to humans in every way, there would always be a danger of bringing undue pressure, akin to coercion, upon the freedom of choice of the men and women involved.[2]

Since whatever you permit the loyal angels to do, you will also be obliged to permit the evil ones to do as well; and since men and women must find it difficult or impossible to distinguish the good spirits from the bad, except by the work they do and the character of the messages they bring, there would seem to be no advantage, but rather very serious disadvantage, in allowing the angels to have indiscriminate access to the minds and persons of mankind. The race of men will have to learn to work out their own destinies more or less alone, through such personal communion as they may hold with you as their creator, and guided by those written instructions which you have provided for their benefit and moral guidance.

VII

From what has been stated above, it is evident that the making of intelligent, free-acting beings, both men and angels, sufficient in number to populate a world or a universe, must involve a long period of time; because it must involve a long-drawn-out process of testing or trial, that is, a period of moral probation. Characters cannot be created, they can only be developed by the working of the created being in union with his Creator. But inevitably in such a

[2] It seems doubtful if decisions reached under the stress of excitement, or as the result of fear or of hope of personal gain, as in the case of most "miracles," have any lasting moral value whatever. However, such decisions arising as the *result of gratitude* toward God or God's representatives by whom the "miracle" has been performed, may be of great and lasting value.

process there will always be the risk of many misfits, many rejections, before a sufficient number of suitable characters can thus be produced, if all forever, both during this probation and eternally thereafter, are to be allowed genuine free will.

We on this earth now find ourselves in the midst of this process of the biological production of new beings, all of whom are subject to this principle of moral probation, but who are potentially candidates for endless life. This earth is the proving ground, where all the suitable individuals can be selected and tested, and thus prepared for transplantation into a permanent home, which can easily be made for them when the proper time comes.

Browning understood these principles, and expressed various aspects of them on various occasions. He recognized life as a probation, a period of schooling or training, during which God seeks to shape all of us into beings suitable for His eternal plans:

> He fixed thee 'mid this dance
> Of plastic circumstance,
> This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
> Machinery just meant
> To give thy soul its bent,
> Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

With this much now clearly understood, we are ready to consider the moral or ethical principles which must condition the selection of the individuals who will be regarded as "suitable" for a place in the permanent family of the universe after this biological period of probation has been completed.

Chapter III

THE ETHICS OF THE UNIVERSE

When Robinson Crusoe was alone on his island, there were no ethical problems, no problems of social life for him to solve. But when another man appeared in his little world, ethics arose.

So when you decide to create a number of free, intelligent beings, those who are capable of moral choice, then rules or laws applying to their conduct naturally become important.

But so long as these new beings follow the natures with which you have endowed them, and never abuse their privilege of free choice, they will by their lives and all their conduct exemplify only those tendencies of character which you have put into them. Inevitably their conduct must reflect the endowment given them by their creator. Children tend to bring credit or disgrace upon their parents; but though parents have considerable influence in shaping the lives of their children, this comparison is far short of expressing the absolute way in which the Creator has placed the stamp of His own character upon every being that He has made.

But your wise plans for concord and happiness among all your creatures will prevail only so long as every one of them conforms to the rules or laws which you have implanted. If they have all been allowed free choice, the time may come when some of them may revolt, or at least try the experiment of managing their own conduct; and then who can tell beforehand what results are liable to ensue? However, even then these results of wrong choices, which fol-

low as we say "naturally" and inevitably, must like all other contingencies be foreseen and provided for by God; and such results following from moral experiments or rebellious choices must still be of a piece with all the rest of the laws of the universe. For the same rules must hold after the revolt as before. It would outrage every sense of justice and fair play for God to impose an entirely different set of conditions upon His revolting subjects, either harder or easier, than those governing the beings who had remained loyal and obedient.

II

In passing, we may notice here another objection to the theory of organic evolution. For this theory involves long ages of misery and death among all the lower forms of animals before there was any human being to sin or rebel; and this preadamic misery and death among the animals are unaccountable, for why should they exist in a world subject to the wise and humane planning of the Creator? Some theologians, having accepted as fact (instead of as theoretical interpretation) these long ages of suffering and death before man appeared, invented the sophistry of "anticipative consequences," under which the consequences appeared first and the cause afterwards. That is, the trilobites and ammonites and dinosaurs were all exterminated because of what Adam was going to do long afterward. But James D. Dana, the veteran geologist, ticked off this theory effectively. "It is funny," he said, "that the sin of Adam should have killed those old trilobites. The blunderbuss must have kicked back into time at a tremendous rate, to have hit those poor innocents."

In the most revolting form of the evolution theory, in which all biological progress is effected by means of "natural

selection" among chance variations, the theory makes the cruelty and treachery of the surviving animals the very ladder by which the human race came into existence, and the same bloody ladder the means by which the modern races have risen to their present superiority above "primitive" man. Thus, according to this theory, God must have put a high premium on all those revolting and blameworthy characters which we now have to condemn and punish in human society. And not even that clever dialectician, T. H. Huxley, could account for such an ethical somersault. Obviously there must be something radically wrong with such an anti-ethical method by which the human race arose, if a kindly and wise Creator had anything to do with man's origin.

It is safe to say that, if you had been doing the creating, you would never have made mankind in this horrible fashion. I can hardly think of a worse libel on the wise and beneficent Creator revealed in the New Testament.

III

Yet in your assumed role of creator you will find that there are definite conditioning elements. If your created beings are to be anything more than robots, anything more than the clocklike machines of the skies and the unthinking trees and flowers, you must give them the power of free choice, the power of moral freedom. Only on the basis of genuine moral freedom can you in any fairness hold your creatures accountable for their behavior. But real moral freedom always involves the possibility that some one or more of these beings will some day decide to do something not on your program, some line of conduct that you will not like, some deliberate course of life that will surely bring disharmony and revolution into the group. And this dis-

cord will doubtless develop (if allowed to continue) into a rebellion against your power and leadership.

Are you willing to permit this?

On no other basis than this of absolute freedom of moral choice can you ever have companionable or intelligent beings for your creatures. This moral freedom must always involve the possibility of revolt, the possibility of a cosmic mutiny or rebellion. Are you willing to permit such a revolt? And how will you take care of it, if it arises?

After mature reflection you may decide that the ultimate results are worth the risk. You might even be pardoned for deciding that the sooner the cosmic crisis develops the better for all concerned. For then you can have this experimental rebellion over with all the sooner. This, of course, is only our human way of looking at the matter; for time is not a conditioning factor in the mind of the eternal Creator.

IV

But you must never by the slightest act provoke such a revolt. Neither by overt act, nor by neglect of any kind, will it do for you to give any occasion for such a mutiny. For then it would be your fault; and by punishing or suppressing it you would be showing yourself to be a double-dealer, a real rogue. Creators can never afford to act thus, else they could never claim the loyal affection of any of their creatures. Sooner or later, and whether you like it or not, your every act will be subjected to the closest inspection and discussion. And then, if your management of your creatorship will not stand the fullest publicity, how can you expect to retain the respect and loyal homage of your intelligent creatures? Mere unthinking machines will of course continue to do as you want them to do; but the loyalty of free

individualities, like men and angels, can be maintained only by convincing them of your eminent wisdom, benevolence, and fair play.

As I have already said several times, you must never, even by your neglect, to say nothing of connivance, give any of your created beings a bias toward evil or rebellion. Of course it is unthinkable that a wise and good Creator would create beings with a bias toward evil, and then punish them even by the natural laws of cause and effect for following out the dictates of their hereditary nature. To do this would stamp you as a fiend and a tryant. Obviously the real Creator is not that kind of God.

If a rebellion arises, there must be no possible way by which the blame for it can rightly come back upon you. For ultimately the spotlight of pitiless publicity will be turned upon you and all your doings; and every being that you allow to live in your universe throughout eternity will necessarily form an intelligent, reasoned opinion about all the details of what you have done, and how you have conducted your work of creating and managing the universe. Such must always be the unescapable responsibilities of the creator.

But you cannot create mature, stable characters ready-made. Character can come only as the result of individual moral development, only as the crystallization of repeated choices. Yet you as their creator must always supply the energy, the power, both mental and physical, by which they live and do their choosing. So that a mature, developed character of the right kind, one that you can be satisfied with through eternity, must always be the combined product of the individual creature and the creator. The one who revolts at this arrangement, who is determined to manage

himself and refuses to co-operate with his Creator in his character development, is certain to be a misfit in God's universe, one who cannot be safely entrusted with endless life.

> Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
> But we build the ladder by which we rise
> From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
> And we mount to its summit round by round.
> —*J. G. Holland.*

But you must always manage the environment and opportunities of your creatures so that they will have a fair chance for character development. Translated into the terms of actual human life, this means that, in the case of men born with an evil heredity or amid a sordid environment, you must make an allowance for all this; you must not judge them because of what they have inherited, but only by their opportunities slighted, their neglect of your offered means of rescue.

Human beings, though endowed with a certain degree of autonomy which we term moral freedom, can never become wholly autonomous or independent of their Creator. The Christian is one who has surrendered his rebellious manner of life, and has agreed to let the Creator manage his moral life henceforth, just as He has always managed the physical life and must continue to do so throughout eternity. It is unthinkable that any creature can ever outgrow his everlasting dependence upon his Creator.

> Man, like the generous vine, supported lives;
> The strength he gains is from the embrace he gives.
> —*Alexander Pope.*

But Christian character is a growth or development, the resultant of the human uniting with the divine. By the help of the Creator, the individual may grow into all that is good and noble which the Creator plans for him. In the words of Browning:

> Progress, man's distinctive mark alone,
> Not God's, and not the beast's;
> God is, they are,
> Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be.

Ultimately each individual reaches a state of moral maturity, of fixity of character, good or bad, beyond which even from our human point of view there is little prospect of change. God, who sees more deeply into the bases of character, will recognize this time of character maturity, and will be able to say that this individual's probation has ended.

> There is a line, by us unseen,
> That crosses every path,
> The hidden boundary between
> God's patience and His wrath.

It is preposterous for us to think that we can understand all the intricacies of these problems of the effects of environment on free will and moral responsibility. We shall be wise if we admit our finite understanding, and resolutely believe that the Judge of all the earth will do right.

On the other hand, it will be fair and equable if you so plan the laws of cause and effect in their moral aspects that the results of choice will always follow the good and the bad alike, even to their posterity, to help them if these choices are sensible and right, or to hound them if they

have been evil. But all such laws of cause and effect, in morals and ethics even as in physics and chemistry, must be administered with absolute impartiality, both to those who keep on doing right and to those who may have gone wrong.

V

But in case some of your newly made creatures want to become physically and morally independent of your guidance and control, what are you going to do about it? Will you permit them to take your delegated power into their own hands, and run off on a course of moral disobedience? Would you have patience to keep on supplying them with mental and physical energy to maintain their evil careers which are quite contrary to your ideals and the best interests of the rest of the universe?

> The sweet persuasion of His voice
> Respects thy sanctity of will.
> He giveth day: thou hast thy choice
> To walk in darkness still.
> —*J. G. Whittier.*

Yet only by allowing the possibility of such a state of things can you ever hope to have a group of happy, free, intelligent beings in your universe. There is no other possible way. The danger of a cosmic rebellion is inseparably present in every group of beings to whom you grant moral freedom; and whenever such an incipient revolt arises, you would necessarily have to permit it to run a certain course. I mean that you would have to allow it to exist for a time.

For how long a time, and under what limiting conditions, would be questions for infinite wisdom alone to decide. Some consideration of these aspects of the problem will be

given later. But of course you as the creator would need to have all the details of the entire program well thought out before you ever started your work of creating. Otherwise you might find that you had started something that you could not stop.

Obviously, a wise and good creator is not going to allow a set of mutineers to establish themselves permanently in His universe. A rebellion of all the subjects of the great King is almost unthinkable. Accordingly we need not here suppose that any initial rebellion would be allowed to go on until it involved the entire universe. A cosmic rebellion that is allowed to become permanent and unending, is a preposterous supposition in a universe run by a wise and good Creator. Evil must have definite limits of toleration, limits both of amount and of time. As F. W. Faber has said:

> For right is right, since God is God,
> And right the day must win;
> To doubt would be disloyalty,
> To falter would be sin.

However, it might be unwise for the creator to crush out a revolt immediately after it appeared. For wise purposes, that is, for the purpose of teaching valuable lessons to the rest of the universe, the creator might allow a rebellion to arise and run a course for a limited time.

Yet one thing is absolutely certain. The way in which the creator handles such a cosmic rebellion will openly display all the latent traits of character which he possesses. If he is not absolutely fair and honest and wise and merciful at all times and in all respects, he will certainly run the risk of alienating the respect and loyalty of all his created intelligences.

In view of all these dangerous contingencies are you still willing to create a few million intelligent, free beings who will be capable of raising something like a mutiny against you and your system of government?

The real Creator has taken this risk. He fully knew all the possibilities, all the consequences. And He decided that it would be worth while to create intelligent, free beings with the power of choice.

We and the rest of the universe are now in the midst of the process for the final settlement of this cosmic mutiny, and the agelong controversy thus occasioned. It is no exaggeration, it is only a statement of manifest fact, that the understanding of this cosmic controversy ought to be the most fascinating and the most important problem which can occupy the time and the mental powers of all human beings. Obviously our standing forever with our Creator, and thus our destiny, must depend upon the way in which we now relate ourselves to this sin problem, this cosmic mutiny. For the Creator must of course always have the final word as to the kind of beings that He is to keep alive or have living with Him in His universe throughout future ages. On the other hand, it is an elemental truth that the methods by which He is now managing this entire problem of moral evil must determine what His created beings are going to think of Him throughout all eternity.

VI

We in modern times have grown familiar with the idea of natural law as a fixed tendency or habit of nature. But we are liable to forget that in a community of free, thinking, moral beings, such as compose God's universe, some moral or ethical law must be as much a fundamental cosmic reality.

Any and every law must originate in some mind before it is formulated in words. As scientists may express the observed habits of nature in some formal statement, so God may express His moral law in human language. But in both instances all the facts and relationships of the universe, whether physical or moral, must have antedated their formulation in words, that is, they must have existed from the very beginning, or before they were embodied in any specific statement. The mere statement of any of them did not make it a "law," it only formulated basic facts or principles already existing. Natural law, like the Decalogue itself, is of divine origin. Both are founded upon the very nature of the universe, which means that they originate in the mind or will of God. In short, all the tendencies or principles of nature (physical as well as moral) must have been intelligently planned before creation, and all alike must express the nature or the character of the Creator.

It must be according to the wish, will, or decree of God that hydrogen is light, and gold and lead, heavy; that copper will conduct electricity, but rubber and glass will not; that oxygen is favorable to animal life, while cyanogen is not. Similarly it must be according to the deliberate planning of the Mind behind the universe that altruism is good, and selfishness, evil; that benevolence conduces to happiness, but hatred and envy bring misery and death. All these basic principles or laws are merely the concrete expressions of the will or the decree of the Creator. In the language of mathematical science, God's will must always and forever be the norm or frame of reference for the conduct of all His creatures.

Byron had a true idea of the fundamental nature of law throughout God's universe when he wrote:

The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree
I planted; they have torn me, and I bleed.
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

Thus we see how ridiculous is the suggestion that the moral law of God can be changed in any way to accommodate it to an emergency like that of sin. As soon might we look for God Himself to abdicate or to change His own nature. We may note what seem to us like changes in the *policy* of God in His dealings with new circumstances; but the Creator's will or purpose must forever be the same, because it is grounded on infinite wisdom, and must always be best.

The universality of physical law is well expressed by Samuel Rogers:

> That very law which molds a tear
> And bids it trickle from its source,—
> That law preserves the earth a sphere,
> And guides the planets in their course.

And James Russell Lowell wrote:

> In vain we call old notions fudge,
> And bend our conscience to our dealing;
> The Ten Commandments will not budge,
> And stealing *will* continue stealing.

Again, since a law of any kind originates in an intelligent will, it must always be an index or an expression of the being that originates it. Even a despot's caprice must reveal his nature. The shah of Persia is said to have asked the Prince of Wales to have a man put to death in order that he might see the English method of execution. When the prince told him that this was not within his power, the shah

asked what was the use of being a king if he could not kill any of his subjects at his pleasure. All the moral laws of the universe, like the laws of the natural world, must be expressions of the nature, the character, of the Creator.

As natural law exists with or without any formal expression in words, so moral law, being grounded in the very nature of God and the universe, must have existed antecedent to any formal or verbal expression of it, such as we see in the Decalogue or the Sermon on the Mount. There were many partial or temporary laws announced to the Israelites, which were only codicils or temporary modifications of eternal principles; they passed away with the conditioning circumstances; but the moral law of the Creator is as eternal as Himself.

In reality what we term the "laws of nature" are only our more or less accurate statement of the orderly, methodical ways in which the Manager of the universe carries on His everyday work. We call them invariable; but this means only that God Himself is methodical and reliable. Since He always does everything in the best possible way, when all things are taken into consideration, what need has He to change His methods?

> And through my doubts and ignorance, I trust
> The Power that bound with laws the moon and tide
> And hung the stars in heavenly spaces wide,
> Must, by their witness, be both wise and just.

Any observed regularity which we call a "law of nature" can be only our poor, human way of describing the working methods of the Creator. Yet whenever the larger or moral aspects of the universe demand that some other method be employed, then this other method will certainly be used. *For God runs His universe as a moral or ethical system;*

and the moral emergencies brought about by what we term "sin" have made necessary many deviations from what would have been otherwise universal and invariable methods.

What we call "miracles" are simply moral emergencies (as we humans would call them) which an all-wise, all-merciful Creator is meeting with special treatment adapted to the needs of the moment. They are emergency measures; but they are not different in principle from His ordinary methods in any essential respect. God alone must be assigned as the efficient cause of even those processes which we term "natural," just as truly as of those which we class as "miracles." The distinction between them is in reality illogical and misleading, and based on our human limitations in understanding both miracles and natural processes. Both alike are the work of God. The only difference is that we become used to events taking place in certain ways, and when we see something happen out of the ordinary, we are surprised and call it a "miracle." From God's point of view everything that He does is "natural;" from our point of view everything that takes place (except what are clearly due to second causes) might well be termed "supernatural."

The old deistic definition of a "miracle" as a violation of the laws of nature, was a question-begging statement, and about as false and silly as one can imagine. It was used by David Hume; and many contemporary theologians were themselves so muddled in their thinking that they allowed it to pass as a correct statement. It is sheer nonsense from every point of view. The theologians who have accepted it as a working definition have always found themselves in a labyrinth of difficulties.

Every principle of sound reason assures us that the Creator can never allow Himself to be restricted by any mere phys-

ical "laws." Whenever any of His finite beings get into some predicament and call on Him for help, or when as the results of evil some special act of "intervention" seems to be demanded, God must act. Whenever His loyal beings need some methods different from the usual, we may depend upon His employing methods appropriate to the circumstances. And these unusual methods we term "miracles."

Now the necessity for some such unprecedented action on the part of the Creator may arise as the result of the entreaties or prayers of a large number of His loyal subjects, or by the plea of even a few. It is thus that prayers for miraculous intervention are objectively answered. For the sincere prayers of God's loyal people create a moral situation which might never have existed if these prayers had not been offered. It is thus that prayer has a true objective value and effectiveness; and true miracles in answer to prayer are constantly taking place, though without disturbing in the least any of the "laws" of the universe. In fact, it is the higher laws of the universe which demand that these prayers be answered.

> More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
> Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
> For what are men better than sheep or goats
> That nourish a blind life within the brain,
> If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
> Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
> For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
>
> —*Alfred Tennyson.*

VII

In the light of what we have now learned, it is of considerable interest to study the relative importance of some

points in the moral law. The evolution theory tends to place the chief emphasis on the evil aspects of animalism, or the physical sins. It has extreme difficulty in showing how such traits as envy, pride, avarice, self-sufficiency, and hatred of the Creator are wrong or blameworthy. In its relativity of morals, it can show that the antisocial propensities are contrary to the smooth running or the well-being of the state; but it takes no recognition of "sin" as a manifestation of utter selfishness and of rebellion against God.

Goethe, the German poet, was not a gross sensualist; but he derided Christian meekness and self-denial; and his whole life was characterized by an attempt to become independent of his Creator. He has been called a "Narcissus in love with himself." He might better be termed an unregenerated pagan who had been tamed and groomed by the reflex influences of the ambient Christian climate in which he had been reared. I mention him here only as a type of the multitudes of respectable non-Christians who think they have little or no need of God. But would it be right or safe for the Creator to bestow never-ending life upon such a person, and thus compel the rest of the universe to put up with his arrogant and snobbish ways throughout all eternity? Besides, who knows what other forms of rebellion against truth and God's law of altruistic service would inevitably develop out of the seeds of selfishness and hatred of God which this rebel persisted in cherishing throughout his long career?

Selfishness, or the desire to be and remain self-sufficing or independent of the Creator, seems to be the most basic of all evil characters. If we assume the modernistic position, that only those forms of conduct are to be called immoral which are harmful to society, there will be many forms of

evil which we cannot condemn; and it is on this account that Marxian socialism and communism tacitly permit many forms of personal grossness or immorality, because they say these are private matters and nobody's business but that of the individuals concerned. Pragmatists or humanists also reject the high ethical motive expressed in the searching phrase, "Thou God seest me;" or in that sublime refusal, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Accordingly, unless we go deeper than the mere good of society, grounding all moral conduct on our inherent duty toward the Creator, and accepting the eternal obligation on our part to live up to all that He expects of us, we shall always have difficulty in proving certain forms of mere personal immorality to be wrong or immoral, because of the difficulty of showing that they *harm society*. Similarly, pragmatism has difficulty in showing how the mere feelings of pride or envy or avarice are immoral; whereas, on the high argument that they are completely contrary to the character of our Creator, these forms of innate selfishness are seen to be among the worst or the most incurable propensities of our fallen human nature.

Yet the writers on ethical subjects have strangely neglected to show how any one form of evil or sin, when persistently cherished, always tends to spread like a moral cancer and to infect other features of the individual's character. But this is a basic law or principle which could be illustrated in a thousand ways throughout the entire history of the human race. How often, for example, do we see such a sin as sexual irregularity spreading its infection through the entire fabric of the character, until the whole being is depraved, and almost every other evil propensity is seen sprout-

ing from this one noxious root. Thus it is as true of any other sin as of the love of money—it becomes a root of every kind of evil. This tendency of sin to be infectious in all its forms is what makes it so dangerous for God to give endless life to anyone who is not in complete harmony with Him and His system of conduct.

For human life is after all a unity. When an individual is at enmity with his God, certain of the cruder manifestations of this enmity may be covered up or held under formal restraint for a time, only to break out under suitable conditions of environment or opportunity. For many people keep congratulating themselves on the evil things they don't do; or as Samuel Butler expressed it:

> Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to.

Hence it would be wholly unsafe for the Creator to take over into the permanent society of His loyal followers any created being who had not experienced the complete eradication of every root of evil from his nature. Yet when this complete eradication has been accomplished, the man or the woman will forever afterward remain loyal to the Creator. He will stand true to those eternal principles of life and character which God has wisely established for the good and happiness of His universe.

Sensuality in its varied forms may spread to other traits of the character; yet in and of itself it seems to be much more easily cured by the gospel of Christ than are such evils as the nonanimal sins, like hatred, envy, pride, selfish ambition, and avarice. These nonanimal sins seem to be the worst, the hardest to get rid of, and in the last analysis they are most hateful to a just and righteous God, because they

are most directly contrary to His nature. It is self-evident that any latent seeds or roots of these nonanimal propensities will, if retained, prove the wrecking of the character which harbors them. It would be highly unsafe for God to endow with immortal life anyone who had not been completely cured of all these evils. For if such a being were allowed to enter heaven, he would soon prove a source of mischief and unhappiness to the other dwellers there, as well as an ultimate source of misery to himself. He would not be an asset to heaven, but a horrible liability; and his evil influence would only increase with the passing ages. For sin is not cured by environment; else why did it originate with Lucifer, whose environment was perfect? The only safe course for the Creator would be to see that no carrier of sin is allowed access to His eternal kingdom.

The words of our greatest English epic poet are pertinent here:

> A mind not to be changed by place or time.
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

But it will now be in order for you, in the role of the creator, to consider how you would handle a real revolt or mutiny among your created intelligences.

Chapter IV

WHAT ABOUT A REBELLION?

Well, the expected has happened. You have created a few millions of free-acting beings; and you now find yourself with a small rebellion on your hands.

What are you going to do about it?

I have called it a small rebellion; for any revolt against a creator must always be a small affair, so far as any physical consequences are concerned. A being who can create by a word, who can control a thousand million suns, who can manage without mistake all the electrons and atoms of which they are composed, will have no physical problem about eliminating any revolt that can possibly arise. We can't make any comparison or analogy in human life which would do the situation justice.

My reader may possibly say: "I will abolish all my creatures, and I will start all over again. Then I can have beings as I want them."

But can you?

I grant that you could easily "liquidate" them all; that would be no material problem for a creator. But should you do so, you would only be back where you were in the beginning. And such an expedient would be an open confession of failure on your part, a confession that you had not completely thought out your line of conduct in advance.

Besides, complications have arisen. Only a portion of your beings have revolted; many still remain true and loyal, in spite of all the inducements to revolt brought to bear upon them by the rebels. Are you going to treat them all alike,

and abolish them all, the good and the bad together? Yet if you put an end to only the mutinous ones, how can you be sure of the genuine, disinterested loyalty of the rest? Would not the suspicion arise that many of them are keeping their place and obeying you only through terror? How would you know that they are really serving you from a sense of love and loyalty?

Doubtless you could read their secret thoughts; but trouble and distrust would almost certainly arise among them from that sense of mutual doubt and suspicion which would inevitably spring up in the minds of those whom you had spared. For *they* could not thus read the minds of one another; and suspicion of one another's loyalty could not fail to generate unhappiness. Also, in case at some future time you decide to create some more intelligent beings, how would the history of this summary execution of a number of their predecessors appear to them, unless they have the benefit of a full and impartial discussion and a complete understanding? Secrecy, arbitrariness, or the appearance of tyranny are poor foundations on which to construct a happy universe of free, intelligent beings.

Evidently it is going to be a difficult matter to handle a cosmic rebellion in such a manner as to dispense transparent justice to all concerned, and at the same time do it all openly before the eyes of the entire universe so that all who have not taken the rebel side will thereafter remain loyal and true.

II

If now we look at the present realities, it is clear that the Creator did not immediately kill off all those beings who first mutinied in heaven.

Why did He not do so?

It is equally clear that the Deity was not caught unawares. Surprise is not for Him. We must never think of Him as being confronted with a situation for which He has not already made provision. In previous chapters we have spoken of miracles as being due to emergencies; but in reality there can be no real emergencies with God.

It is evident that, instead of dealing out summary justice in the first stages of the cosmic rebellion, He allowed it to develop quite fully among the angels in what we term heaven (which is a term we use to cover an indefinable portion of God's universe outside this speck of a world). Later He allowed the controversy to be transferred to this earth, giving the revolting angels a still further chance to enlist recruits, by seducing the newly created race of human beings.

This is not alone the Miltonic scheme of the origin of evil; it is the teaching of the Scriptures; and it is also the only rational account of the way in which the Creator handled the incipient stages of the great rebellion.

III

But how did evil and rebellion first arise among the sinless angels? How could beings created holy and with no bias toward evil so far forget their duty and their eternal obligations as actually to raise a revolt against their Maker?

It is useless to argue that such a contingency could not happen; for it has taken place. We see the actuality all around us. We may not understand its genesis; but it has occurred.

We cannot hope to "explain" the beginnings of sin. That is, we cannot show a reason or a cause for its existence. To show a "cause" for it would be to defend it; and then it would not really be wrong, it would not be blameworthy, it

would not be "sin." In that case, its true origin would have to be the Creator Himself; since He alone must have planned this "cause" for it. For the Creator must always be responsible for any and every cause-and-effect process which appears anywhere throughout His universe.

No; sin is mysterious, unaccountable, uncaused.

The details of the first beginnings of revolt have not been revealed to us. But probably the story, so far as we human beings are capable of understanding it, would be about as follows:

Lucifer, one of the highest officers of the angelic host, began to indulge a feeling of self-importance, or of pride regarding his talents and powers, perhaps also of pride regarding his high position. He did not realize that all his talents and opportunities were mere bestowed endowments given him by the Creator. He failed to realize the elemental truth that a mere creature can never become independent of his Creator, can never escape from eternal dependence upon the Creator for the moment-by-moment supply of life which he enjoys. He evidently got the idea somehow that he was a self-sufficient being, that he had intrinsic life and ability of his own, and that he was not dependent on anyone else. This is the very essence of what we call "pride."

> Pride, self-adoring pride, was primal cause
> Of all sin past, all pain, all woe to come.

From one point of view such a feeling of self-sufficiency might seem natural enough. He certainly had not witnessed his own creation. He was evidently created mature or fully formed, and thus had no memory of having grown from immature beginnings, as all human beings can remember about themselves. If it happened that he was the first angel

to be created, or if all the angels were created simultaneously, how could he possibly know anything about his own origin, except what he was told by the Creator? And if he once began to doubt or question his absolute dependence upon the Creator, how could the real truth of the situation be proved to him if he did not believe God's account of it all?

If all the angels were created simultaneously, it is very likely that Lucifer had never witnessed a creation, when he began to indulge his feelings of independence and incipient revolt. Even if he had witnessed a real creation, or especially if he had seen such occurrences take place on successive occasions, would he not feel inclined to attribute these phenomena to some unknown "natural law"? Thousands of events take place all around us in the plant and animal worlds, which by mere repetition seem commonplace to us; whereas, if we witnessed them for the first time, we could hardly fail to regard them as "miracles," as wonderful as any new creation.

The seemingly purposive way in which the pollen grain, by a devious path, seeks out the ovule to fertilize it; the way in which a tender seedling can lift a heavy clod of earth or a stone without being crushed by it; the way in which the roots of a tree will burst asunder mighty rocks; or the seemingly intelligent method by which a hormone is manufactured in one part of the human body and dispatched to a specific distant organ to effect a process vital for the health of the body as a whole—how many thousands of such examples do we see all around us, their very commonness seeming to quiet our natural emotion of astonishment and awe! And too often the minds of those who see are satisfied to rest upon the *things,* instead of rising in adoration to the Mind that directs and controls them all.

We must also remember that at that time Lucifer did not have any biological examples of birth and growth before him, or examples of indirect creation, which we usually attribute to "natural law," but which ought to awaken our reasoning faculties to understand how the first ancestors of all came into existence. And he knew nothing of death, for death is solely the result of sin; hence there had never been any such thing as death anywhere throughout the universe. Lucifer merely awoke one morning and found himself alive. How did he come into being? He had not the slightest means of knowing anything about his own creation, except from the testimony of some other being whom he could trust. *God alone could give him such information.* And whenever he began to doubt or distrust God's account of it, how could the elemental fact of his own creation, and thus of his eternal and ineluctable dependence upon the Creator, ever be demonstrated to him? If he once were to adopt an attitude of questioning and incredulity, and refuse to take the facts by simple faith in God's word, how could the real facts in the case ever be brought home to his mind? Would there be any method of investigation by which he might discover this great primal truth of creation on his own account?

And if he persisted in these doubts and this unbelief, gradually becoming more and more pleased with his own keenness in recognizing what his fellow angels failed to see, who could tell to what lengths of estrangement and rebellion these things might lead?

It looks as if this must have been about the way in which the trouble first started in the mind of one of the highest of all created beings.

If you were the creator, what would you do?

IV

In reality we human beings in this twentieth century have many advantages over Lucifer in understanding this primary, vital question of the dependence of all created beings upon their Creator. I do not say this to excuse Lucifer in his revolt; yet it is a simple statement of reality. We have the facts of human biology before us; and it is highly probable that, for a considerable period before the creation of mankind, the angels had never had any such objective instruction. But every human being of today who reflects knows that he had a definite beginning; he also knows that he will have as definite an end. During the few scores of years between this beginning and this termination, he knows that he is absolutely dependent upon the Creator (either directly or indirectly) for life and breath and all things.

True, many people tend to forget all these facts, and consider themselves quite independent of any external or superhuman control. This is true of many who call themselves religious. They may not be *macrodeists,* when it comes to the larger problems of the universe; for they may realize how foolish it is to regard the Creator as a great absentee, who started the world or the universe and then went away on a long vacation, leaving the world to run itself by the power with which He had loaded it up. But in their practical attitude toward the humdrum events of everyday life they are in effect *microdeists;* for they fail to recognize that the Creator is still very intimately and directly engaged in thousands of processes both within us and around us, which we in heathenish fashion keep attributing to "natural law." Macrodeism was long ago banished from serious philosophic thought by the ridicule which it justly incurred; but microdeism seems still to linger on, in spite of the dis-

coveries of modern science in such matters as "action at a distance" and the conservation laws of matter and energy.

V

But if human beings, in spite of their long experience with biological law, still often feel self-sufficient and forgetful of their eternal dependence upon the Creator for absolutely everything, we need scarcely wonder that Lucifer originated and then cherished a feeling of independence and of pride in his own powers and position. And when he allowed these ideas to take final possession of his mind, *sin was born* then and there. All the subsequent history of God's dealings with him and his deluded followers among mankind, has been allowed by the Eternal to occur, in order that the true inwardness of this evil thing called "sin" may become fully known by all His created intelligences in the universe.

Lucifer's guilt was in no way lessened if, as I have already suggested, his first deviations from the right may have been undertaken as a sort of intellectual or moral experiment. But even scientific experiments may be dangerous enough; as when an ignoramus attempts to fool with a high-voltage wire or some sticks of dynamite. A moral experiment may be even more dangerous, as many a young girl has learned to her sorrow. And it should occasion no surprise that this moral experiment on the part of Lucifer, in trusting to his own cleverness instead of trusting the wisdom and authority of the Creator, has resulted in an entire cosmic rebellion and in the ruin of millions of poor human beings.

It ought to be self-evident and calling for no affirmation on my part, that the Creator gave Lucifer ample instruction and warning. We have no right to doubt that the incipient

rebel was always treated kindly and graciously.[1] What he had at first indulged in his mind as an idle fancy, with perhaps no realization of its dangerous character, was shown to be wholly wrong; and he became convinced that he ought openly to acknowledge his intrinsically subordinate position and his complete dependence upon his Maker. We do not know the details of these delicate beginnings of the great rebellion. But we do know that the *will* is the governing factor in man's moral life; and the *will to disbelieve* is often the form in which free choice manifests itself among human beings. Whatever may have been the initial forms of Lucifer's great blunder, we may be certain that in all those initial stages of the conflict the Creator constantly exercised the same kind, thoughtful regard for His created angels that He has since shown in all His dealings with the tragic rebellion of mankind.

But when Lucifer after protracted entreaties refused to retract and definitely committed himself to a defiant attitude toward his Creator, he was not summarily destroyed, as in all justice he might have been. He had by this time won over to his side many others among the angelic host; but now in order for the inevitable or "natural" results of his course to become an eternal object lesson, an eternal moral beacon light of warning to the entire universe, God allowed the controversy to be prolonged and transferred to this earth, where, by the long-drawn-out processes of human biology, through many successive indirect creations, the innate tendencies of sin and rebellion might be vividly illustrated in all their hideous and protean forms. Physical and mental

[1] The careful, kindly way in which Judas was always treated by the Master, with the full foreknowledge that Judas was a traitor, ought to show us how Lucifer was treated by the Creator.

degeneracy, and a steady deterioration of all the finer and nobler phases of character have steadily marked the history of mankind; and it is easy to see that all this has been due to the natural consequences of sin.

But it is not toil and physical hardship which degrade human beings; it is sin, wrong thinking, and wrongdoing. Else why should peoples living in northern climates, where the conditions of life are severe, be the leaders in civilization and culture?

On the contrary, a wise Creator has ordained work and hardship for man's intellectual and moral good. Every thoughtful person knows that this is the case. And long ago Alexander Pope expressed this idea in the well-known lines:

> But He who knew what human hearts would prove,
> How slow to learn the dictates of His love,
> That hard by nature and of stubborn will
> A life of ease would make them harder still,
> In pity to the souls His grace designed
> To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
> Called for a cloud to darken all their years,
> And said: "Go, spend them in a vale of tears."

This is the meaning and the explanation of the long tragedy of human history.

Chapter V

WHY DEATH?

We can now understand why God made the angels or spirit beings first. The making of the angels first, and of human beings afterward, were all parts of the same general plan; and the reasons for every step of the plan must have been clear beforehand to the Creator. And each detailed event, we have reason to believe, has taken place according to the divine planning, and also on schedule time.

We have seen that a revolt of some sort against the Creator's government was from the finite human viewpoint almost inevitable, if a great number of free intelligences were to be brought into existence. And it was wisest to allow this revolt or mutiny to arise first among the angels, who had been directly created. These beings of direct creation did not have any inherent bias toward evil; so it was obviously their own fault, not their Creator's, when they revolted. But the intrinsic evil results of rebellion could not be so well seen or understood by their careers. The lives of angels do not exhibit any of those biological processes which we call "natural law," by means of which the depraving and degenerating results of wrong behavior can be studied during periods of hundreds or thousands of years. It would be crudely wrong for us to say that the human race was created for the express purpose of a cosmic moral demonstration, to show to the onlooking universe the evil results of mutiny, when worked out during thousands of years of human history. Yet it is a simple record of fact that the

cosmic controversy which had already arisen was "allowed" by the Creator to spread among the human beings of this earth, who are now all creatures of indirect creative processes. And the results as worked out during the thousands of years of human history have proved the horrible consequences of rebellion in ways which would have been quite impossible among the angels alone.

Here we are confronted with the problem of God's foreknowledge and His foreordination. The difficulty is partly due to the limitations of our human faculties, but perhaps almost equally due to the equivocations of human language. Words are but clumsy vehicles of thought at the very best; and when we try to deal with highly abstract ideas, especially with large problems about the Creator and His dealings with the universe, about which we have only a few scanty facts, we cannot hope to clear up all the difficulties involved. And if we persist in jimmying the intellectual doors on which nature has written "No Admittance," we can end only in trouble of one sort or another.

God must have had full foreknowledge of both the original revolt of Lucifer, and of the outcome of Lucifer's scheme for seducing mankind. But as Milton has so neatly expressed the idea, this foreknowledge had no influence on the fault of either Lucifer or man; the sad outcome would have proved no less certain even if it had not been foreknown. Nor can we blame the Creator if He so planned all things as to illustrate on a gigantic cosmic scale all the fundamental principles involved. And the working out of these great principles could best be done through the biologic processes of human life and history.

No far-reaching or inclusive truth can ever be adequately stated through the clumsy medium of human language. Yet

if we remember this limitation, it is not so very far astray to say that the entire race of human beings, consisting of the agelong series of indirectly created individuals, may be regarded as an exhibit or a cosmic demonstration before the rest of the onlooking universe of all the fundamental principles of the great controversy. The primal rebel may be said to have started all the trouble by dallying or experimenting with sin, thus initiating what we may term the great cosmic experiment. But of course it is not God who is doing the experimenting. He who sees the end from the beginning must never be spoken of as trying an experiment. It is *Lucifer's experiment, not God's.* But it is a fact that the events of human history have been permitted by a wise God, and He has allowed them to be carried on under the eyes of the onlooking universe, for the purpose of proving or illustrating certain basic principles of right and wrong which could not otherwise have been understood by any mere created beings.

In other words, so far as we can judge of the matter from our human viewpoint, we may say that the working out of these principles of the divine government could not well have been possible among the angels alone, that is, without the creation of man and the biological prolongation of human history. It would be crudely inaccurate to say that the human race have been used as a set of cosmic guinea pigs, for the working out of these principles. Yet it is true that the millions of indirect creations, through the long-drawn-out biological processes of growth, maturity, decline, and death have, under the conditions of what is familiarly termed the plan of salvation, been used to illustrate before the universe many principles of the divine government which, so far as we can see, could never have been so well understood

by all created intelligences without this history of human life.

The relationship between the creature and his Creator is the most basic, the most important, relationship in all the universe. Yet beings like the angels, who had been created *directly* and who did not have before their eyes any biological examples of their own origin, could not in the very nature of things have known anything about how they had originated, except as they were informed by God Himself. Hence they must have had to take on pure faith the entire fact of their own dependent position as creatures, and the necessity of loyalty and implicit obedience on their part. They could realize their entire dependence upon their Creator only upon the testimony of God Himself, which they might or might not believe. And their loving loyalty and obedience could be inspired only by personal confidence in the Creator's wisdom and benevolence, which they were at liberty to question or deny; for it is probable that at that early date only slight proofs of these attributes of the Creator had yet been seen. As we have already learned, there is reason to think that the first symptoms of revolt among the beings whom we term the angels must have arisen over this very problem of the relationship of the creature toward his Creator.

Yet when the first questionings and signs of revolt began to appear, God had a plan ready by which He could illustrate to all the universe His wisdom and power, and also His kindly benevolence toward all His creatures, in a manner to refute every slander, to answer every doubt and questioning, of His mutinous subjects. The long biological experience of human life, the history of man's behavior and of God's dealings with him during many thousands of years,

has become God's historic demonstration of all the essential principles involved in the great controversy. By His dealings with angels and men during these thousands of years, the Creator planned to open up for display all the latent features of His own character, His wisdom and His benevolence, in such a way that no intelligent beings from henceforth could ever doubt or distrust again.

II

But I am supposing that the reader is really doing the job. Hence the question is now pertinent, How would you manage this new emergency so as to teach the best lessons to the onlooking universe, and ultimately win over to your side all those beings who are capable of being thus won over? And how would you deal with the ones who turn out to be finally incorrigible? This is the problem which we must now consider.

Perhaps the reader will throw up his hands in dismay; for it can hardly be expected that anyone would feel competent to plan for such complicated problems. Yet by studying the actual facts as we see them now being worked out in universal human history, we may be able to recognize a few of the deeper principles involved.

When beings are created *de novo,* or out of hand and with no dependence upon any antecedents of the same kind, each is exactly as the Creator intended him to be. But when any being is made by the *indirect* or biological method, as in the case of human beings, although God is still as truly and literally the Creator, complications come in because of the previous choices or experiences through which his ancestors went, so far as these choices or experiences were capable of modifying in any way the birthright of heredity

which these ancestors were capable of passing along to the next generation. Now the laws of biology seem to prove that acquired characters are not transmitted; that is, the effects of use and disuse in the parents are not passed along to the next generation—at least so far as *additions* or *gains* are concerned. As Edwin Grant Conklin remarks, "Wooden legs do not run in families, although wooden heads do." But what has been *lost* or has greatly degenerated through the evil effects of environment, may become registered in the progeny, as in the case of alcoholic degeneration or through the effects of blood disease, such as syphilis. Thus the making of new individuals by the indirect method of creation gives abundant opportunity for the display of what we term "natural" results following upon certain lines of conduct. Of course, all these phenomena which we term according to "natural law," both in physical processes and in morals, must be due to the direct planning of the Creator; but so long as these natural results work out impartially for the good and the bad alike, no one ought to complain.

But much more than mere physical inheritance is involved in the making of new human beings by this indirect method. The greatly prolonged period of helplessness and dependence which are characteristic of the human young, gives occasion for even greater modifying factors to appear in the nurture or guidance which the parents give to their developing offspring. Both physically and culturally we see abundant opportunity for the Creator to visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation, or even much longer, and all according to those impartial methods which we term "natural law." At the same time, He can also show mercy upon hundreds or even

thousands of generations of those that love Him and keep His commandments.

But this indirect method of making new beings so as to illustrate the effects of the kind of lives lived by the parents must involve many thousands of years. Hence, if you were the creator, would you not want to devise some method of providing a period of individual probation, during which each one could develop the kind of character he was destined to become, following which you could seal or crystallize the results attained in this character development, and then store him away in this condition without further change, until the succeeding generations have had their turn? Many thousands of years might be required for all this; but I don't see how else you could possibly plan the matter. No conceivable advantage could accrue by prolonging the careers of the first individuals of the long series during the period while the following generations were maturing and going through their probations. I cannot think of any way by which you could carry out this method of indirect creation of a long series of successive generations, except by ending the careers of the older ones, and placing them away in some sort of storage until the succeeding generations shall have had their turn. And I don't believe that my reader could invent any other way.

But all this means that the scheme of *death* following a period of moral probation is only a wise provision for preserving the individuals in the *status in quo,* until such future time as all the individuals of all the ages may be brought forth together from the sleep of death for an adjustment of the final destiny of all. Hebrews 11:39, 40.

In this way two results are achieved: the production of a sufficient number of loyal beings to populate this planet

when it is made over new, and the demonstration to the onlooking universe of the inevitable results, throughout many thousands of years, of evil or rebellion against the Creator.

Such a scheme we see being worked out by the indirect creation of many successive generations of mankind, through what we term biological processes, ensuring a life of probation, followed by the sleep of death, and a final resurrection of all those who have ever lived upon the earth.

III

Much confusion prevails because of false and unreasonable ideas which theology has added to the elemental and really simple facts about human life, death, and the resurrection. We do well to examine carefully these three fundamental experiences of all mankind.

Life's most important aspect is that it is a period of moral probation. This period of trial and the development of character, good or bad, begins with the child's earliest attainment of moral responsibility, it continues as long as consciousness lasts, and it ends with death. Christianity provides for a radical change of the natural character; and thus we have many twice-born men. But the newly born Christian must go on to develop a mature character, so long as God extends his probation. And all men, the once-born and the twice-born, at the end of their probationary period are at death stored away in this permanent form, whether good or evil, to be brought forth again at the resurrection, which must come for good and bad alike for the final settlement of all moral accounts.

If my reader were looking at the subject of death from the scientific point of view, he would surely understand by

the word *death* exactly what the doctor and the undertaker understand it to be, exactly what Martha and Mary understood, when they mourned for their brother, and said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." The Bible always speaks of death as an enemy, as the extinction of all life, all activity, all knowledge. Psalm 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10. It is the uniform and consistent teaching of the entire Bible.

And why not? What shred of science or of common sense is there in the popular theological definition of death as the time for the separation of the "soul" from the "body," and that after such a "death" the individual is much more alive than ever before? Such a view would of course make nonsense of the biological scheme outlined above.

Not much better is the view that the "soul" is continued in the *status in quo* at the end of earthly probation, without reward for right conduct or punishment for guilt, until it is reunited again to the "body" at the resurrection.

This theory of an "intermediate state" between death and the resurrection has been widely held, and it seems to have arisen out of a personification or a reification of the many rhetorical passages in both the Old Testament and the New which speak of "Sheol" or "Hades" as the place of the dead. In all these many instances the original language does not imply any more objectivity for this "intermediate state" than is conveyed by our English words, "the nether world," or "the grave." From the one end of the Bible to the other, the uniform and consistent teaching is that death is a state of unconsciousness, of the utter cessation of all activity, physical and mental. In numberless instances it is compared to a sleep. The only hope of a future life (apart from the hope of a translation without seeing death at the second

coming of Christ) is that of being raised from the sleep of death in a literal resurrection, of which Christ's resurrection is the example and the assurance.

It is better to say that the "body" is as indispensable as the "soul" for the continued existence of the individual, and that death is simply the end of life. This is the Bible view, the scientific view, and the view of common sense. A highly artificial theology has borrowed the theory of an immortal "soul" from a heathenish philosophy, and together they have palmed it off on a world pathetically longing for an assurance of a future life, with the result that today almost everyone is perplexed over all the fundamental ideas connected with the great problems of human probation and human destiny.

Death is always spoken of in the Bible as the penalty for sin. This is easily understood if we take death in its straightforward, common-sense meaning. But the theory that death is simply the separation of the soul from the body, that the soul then goes directly to bliss or woe, as the case may be, at some future time to be reunited to the long-discarded body, doesn't make good sense. What is still worse, it completely obscures the eminently just and wise reason why God has decreed death upon the entire sinful race of mankind. On the other hand, if we understand death to be simply a method of closing the probation of the individual, so that the man or the woman henceforth awaits the period when all shall be contemporaries and make their appearance together, as Joseph Addison expresses it, we shall find ourselves in exact accord with every fundamental teaching of the Scriptures, of science, and of sound philosophy; and in addition we shall find all the great problems of life and religion immediately clarified by a great light.

Death, as Richard Brinsley Sheridan remarked, is a debt; and his mandamus is binding on all alike, and admits no bail, no demurrer. This debt is due as the penalty for sin, and all the pains and weaknesses leading up to it are installments, with the full final payment still due and payable on demand.

Yet, as we have seen, death is also a divinely appointed method of closing the probation of the man or the woman, of crystallizing their moral attainments, good or bad, and then of storing the individual safely away, until such time as the Creator sees fit to bring to life again all those whom He is willing to have in His universe throughout eternity, and who He is sure will be able to live together for evermore without discord.

The two periods of resurrection are expressly mentioned in the Scriptures (Revelation 20:4-6; and elsewhere), and correspond to the two classes of mankind, the good and the evil. The good have their turn first, at the resurrection of life. But the disloyal ones also have their own time, which the Master Himself picturesquely called "the resurrection of damnation." John 5:29. These two resurrections are both necessary, because the Creator must treat all men fairly and equably. The protracted period between the two resurrections, during which the rebels remain in their graves, is, as we shall see, necessary as a period of inspection or judgment, when it shall be decided what punishment is to be meted out individually to the incorrigibles.

Thus by a resurrection we mean it literally, a renewal of the former life. Probationary life has no second edition in which we may correct the blunders made in the first pages of our record. No change of character whatever is involved by this renewal of life; the person simply begins

again exactly where he left off, he comes to life with exactly the same character that he had before death. This is the primary, the obvious, meaning of the word *resurrection.* The word has a long history, and has taken on many figurative meanings; and untold confusion has resulted from the habit which many have adopted of taking its secondary and figurative meanings instead of the primary and literal one. In the Bible, *resurrection* has no other meaning than a literal renewal of the former physical life, except where it is used in some obvious figure of speech; and it is wrong and unscholarly to take this figurative use as if it were the primary.

> The mossy old graves where the pilgrims sleep
> Shall be opened as wide as before,
> And the millions that sleep in the mighty deep
> Shall live on this earth once more.

IV

With all these facts and principles agree the noble words of William Temple, archbishop of Canterbury, in a recent notable work,[1] in which he says that the Christian doctrine of eternal life "is a doctrine, not of immortality, but of resurrection," and that the New Testament "regards this resurrection as an act and gift of God, not an inherent right of the human soul as such."

This author, who is the son of a former archbishop of Canterbury and is now himself in the same high ecclesiastical position, will hardly be accused of heresy in this matter, though what he says is so contrary to the teaching of natural or inherent immortality, which is itself the real heresy. He

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[1] *Nature, Man, and God,* pages 452-472. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1934.

proceeds to explain why the popular teaching on this subject can hardly fail to have evil results:

"The great aim of all true religion is to transfer the center of interest and concern from self to God. Until the doctrine of God in its main elements is really established, it would be definitely dangerous to reach a developed doctrine of immortality. . . . Except as an implicate in the righteousness and love of God, immortality is not a religious interest at all. . . For these reasons it seems to me, as far as I can judge, positively undesirable that there should be experimental proof of man's survival of death [as is sought for by the Psychical Research Society and all Spiritists.]"

Doctor Temple goes on to say that whatever hints of natural immortality may be thought of as implied in certain isolated texts of the New Testament when standing alone, the prevailing doctrine of the Christian Scriptures is "that God alone is immortal, being in His own nature eternal; and that He offers immortality to men not universally but conditionally."

These are noble words, and timely. The longing after a future life is a God-inspired instinct. But it should lead us to seek for this eternal life only in God's authorized way. On the other hand, we have all seen specific examples where this theory of man's having an inherent title to immortality has had a positively evil effect on men who steadily refuse God's offered terms of a future life, but resolutely persevere in inventing "proofs" that they are destined to have immortality nevertheless.

The genuine Christian doctrine of a resurrection as the only gateway to any future life would save us from all these false hopes. For as Dr. Temple has so well expressed the situation, immortality is a gift from God, not an inherent

property of the soul. It can be attained only on the terms laid down by God, through the appointed Mediator, Jesus Christ. All other hopes of a happy future life are vain and delusive.

So shall it be at last, in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh, and life's shadows flee;
Oh, in that glad hour, fairer than day dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with Thee!
—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

V

It is rash to say that the Creator cannot bring back to renewed life any being who has ever lived. Even from the scientific point of view, we can understand a literal resurrection when we remember two very elementary sets of facts.

First, every act we do, every thought we harbor, results in modifications of the brain and tissue cells, these modifications becoming registered in more or less permanent organic states. These resulting states of the brain and nerve tissues are the anatomic and physiologic counterparts of what character is in the moral realm. Could we see deeply enough into the cellular structure, and were we wise enough, we might read the bent of character from an inspection—ultramicroscopic, of course—of these tissues. For they are a class of transcendental fingerprints which would serve to identify each human being, and may also be regarded as a register of the moral experiences and transformations through which the man has passed.

Hence, it seems to me all this means that, when the Creator reproduces the exact organic condition of each human being as it stood at death, He is thereby reproducing the moral character which the individual had at that time.

A second scientific fact helps us to see how this could easily be done by the Creator. For all the atoms of carbon are alike; all the atoms of iron are alike; and the same is true of the phosphorus, the nitrogen, and all the other elements composing the human organism. Thus, as all the atoms of carbon are duplicates of one another, in a resurrection it would not be necessary to bring together the original identical atoms which composed the body of the man at death. So long as *the same number of atoms of each sort were put together in the same relationship as prevailed during life,* the man would be truly resurrected, and would resume the current of his thoughts where they ceased at death. Prof. A. N. Whitehead and others have shown what a large influence the mere arrangement of parts, or their organization, may have on the nature or characteristics of anything in the natural world. The almost infinite number of different substances which may be formed by merely varying the arrangement of such elements as carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen may also assist us in realizing how character states may become registered in the tissues, and be again reproduced in the resurrection.

When the ashes of Wycliffe and of other saints of God were scattered by their enemies into neighboring streams or the ocean, in the vain hope that thus there could be no resurrection for these men, the entire action showed not only a disbelief in the power of God, but also showed a complete ignorance of the two scientific aspects of the resurrection problem given above. Similarly the familiar jibes at this doctrine of the resurrection of the body, based on fancied complications arising when certain particles are hypothetically made to belong during life to two or more persons at different periods, also reveal the same ignorance

of simple scientific principles, and are a denial of the power of the great Creator.

Of course, any such event as a bodily resurrection implies creative power and wisdom. But there is nothing absurd or impossible about a resurrection, if we believe in a Creator.

VI

The philosophic necessity of a resurrection is seen in the fact that it provides a plan whereby all those people who have lived their little days of probation during many long periods of human history, may be put away successively in storage, until such time as the entire human history is complete, when they can all be brought forth together, to be rewarded or judged at the same time and in the same way. It is the time of which Joseph Addison so eloquently wrote, when we shall all of us "be contemporaries, and make our appearance together."

In the words of John Donne:

> One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
> And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

Thus the general scheme of human biology, as a part of God's plan for working out the cosmic problem of evil, turns vitally around these closely related events, death and the resurrection. In the popular system of theology, these two events are but vaguely understood or wholly misunderstood. But in the true philosophy of the Creator's scheme, these events fill key positions. Rightly understood, death is neither an accident nor a mere vindictive punishment for individual sins. Neither is a general resurrection an incredible prodigy, without reason or connection with other cosmic events. Both are absolutely essential in any scheme for producing

human beings throughout long periods of world history by the biological processes of secondary creation, if these successive generations consist of mixed populations of good and evil, and if the Creator is to have a consistent plan of rewards and punishments and is to treat all alike.

VII

It is evident that under any plan of selecting only certain qualified people, or people with certain characters, who are to be entrusted with endless life, there is liable, in a world of free will, to be many who have to be rejected, because they are not morally and spiritually qualified. This is because, as the case now stands in this world of sin, these specially qualified ones must be selected from a general population consisting largely of rebels and renegades. Accordingly, the first woman, "the mother of all living," was told by her Creator that her sorrow and her progeny would have to be greatly multiplied. Genesis 3:16. In order for the Lord to get the desired number of qualified, loyal beings from among her descendants born under sin, many more would have to be produced than would have been necessary to populate the earth without any sin; since only a few ever become willing to follow wholeheartedly the divine plan of life. And as we consider the record of human history, it is clear that in some ages and in some countries the number of those salvaged from the mass of humanity must have been pitifully small.

We are not here attempting to answer the query whether the Creator might not have devised some better plan of repopulating this small world after the first plan went astray. Obviously He could have wiped the slate clean, and could then have created an entirely new population for this planet,

as He may at some future date create other sets of beings for other worlds when they are created. But we are not in a position to understand all the moral factors involved in such a proceeding; and it is unwise for us to speculate about matters concerning which we know so little. However, it seems evident that the beings who will hereafter be created (if such is to be the case) will never need to know by personal experience the horrible results of sin and rebellion. When a large number of children have been burned by a red-hot stove, the younger ones can usually be counted upon to learn by vicarious experience—if they have any sense. We are told that the lurid lesson of this one sad experience of a world that went astray will ever shine as a warning against any subsequent experiment with evil. Nahum 1:9. So far as we human beings can judge of the matter, the tragic experience of this one wayward planet has been permitted in order to serve as a lesson for the rest of the universe during all future ages.

And since sin has now become established among mankind, the death of each and all, of the good and of the evil, is now essential for the carrying out of the divine plan.

When, and only when, the requisite number of suitable persons has been made up under the divine training, out of the vast numbers who persist in rebellion and will not have this Man to reign over them, when all the slanders and accusations against the Creator have been forever cleared up, and God's wisdom and benevolence have been completely vindicated, then will the prolonged history of human revolt and salvation come to an end. Then will have arrived the time for all those loyal ones who have been stored away in graves of hope to be brought forth for never-ending life. On them will be bestowed the gift of a transformed, glorified

body, such as Christ Himself possessed after His resurrection. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," while all the vast numbers of those who have not been pronounced "blessed and holy," and hence are not qualified for the first resurrection, will by the very fact of having been left in their graves be doomed to a later resurrection, termed by the Master Himself "the resurrection of damnation." 1 Cor. 15:53; John 5:29.

That famous medieval hymn, *Dies Irae* implies something of the horror of such a fate, when in its closing stanza it voices a prayer on behalf of those who are thus left over for this awful second resurrection:

> Well may they curse their second breath,
> Who rise to a reviving death:
> Thou great Creator of mankind,
> Let guilty man compassion find!

It is sad, unutterably sad, that there should be so many moral failures, so many ethical misfits, in this history of mankind. Yet in the light of the final outcome no blame can ever attach to the Creator in any single instance. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. Yet of how many is Christ obliged to testify in sorrow: "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life"! John 5:40.

To the human mind, these seem to be the inevitable results following from the creation of free-acting, intelligent beings, endowed with the awful responsibility of free moral choice, capable of following and obeying the Creator, or of raising a rebellion against Him.

Chapter VI

CURING THE COSMIC CANCER

In the universe you have created, trickery and falsehood employed by the rebels seem to give them a decided advantage; for these are methods which you as the creator cannot stoop to imitate. Also these underhanded methods seem to give the rebellion a tendency to spread in an alarming way and to infect many of your innocent subjects, who are quite unprepared to resist or even to understand these new and strange developments.

To be sure, the alternative is always before you that you might abolish the entire mess and start all over again. You might in disgust wipe the slate clean, and then create an entirely new set of creatures. But this would be confessing that you had blundered. Then too, the new set of beings might not behave any better than the previous ones—unless, from the beginning, you made them machines or robots that would act exactly according to plan. Given freedom of choice, how seemingly inevitable it is that some beings will decide to become independent of the Creator, and will flout all His methods of behavior planned for the best good of the universe.

It is evident that the God who actually made the universe did not act hastily or summarily in dealing with the rebellion. He did not destroy the disgusting mess, and has not done so even after thousands of years of constantly increasing horror and violence. But we must remember that there can be no physical or material problem for the Creator, no

problem at all if He decides to employ force or power. He has, however, committed Himself to work out in His own chosen way the moral problem involved, without the slightest coercion of the will of any single being, good or bad; and now at last He seems to be in a fair way to complete a successful scheme for handling the entire situation along strictly moral and ethical lines.

It is our immediate task to consider the scheme adopted, to judge if it is fully in harmony with all the demands of justice, wisdom, and the highest good of all concerned.

II

If you were the creator, you could hardly fail to sympathize with the suffering and degradation due to sin in your creatures; for you are the responsible cause of their existence. You do not like their behavior, of course; but their weak, human nature, and indeed the entire structure of the universe, is such that sin must always develop suffering and degradation in constantly increasing ratio. A father may not like the conduct of his son; yet he cannot fail to feel keenly the shame and disgrace which comes upon his wayward child. Nor can he help suffering with him. Can the real Creator do less? How could you avoid this reflex effect's coming back upon you as the responsible cause of it all? Could you in honor fail to meet the situation in any way which would most effectually cure the cosmic trouble which has appeared?

Remember, you have a large number of beings who are still loyal to you and all your plans. They have not been seduced by the strong propaganda which the rebels have put out against you, a propaganda which has sometimes almost seemed to have a free field and no opposition. They

still believe in your justice, your wisdom, and your everlasting goodness. But they are looking to you to do something to remedy the situation. What are you going to do about it?

It seems self-evident that you would have to show to your loyal friends that you are willing to go to the limit to convince all, both friends and rebels, that you are running the universe along lines of absolute goodness and justice. You cannot overlook wrongdoing; nor can you now in the face of rebellion so modify your laws as to whitewash the wrong and make it equal to the right. For the moral and ethical principles on which you are professing to run the universe must be as fixed and as just as any physical laws of nature; and it is your business to see that these ethical principles work out in an invariable and equable manner.

But here is the real crux of the whole difficulty. It is not mere acts or outward behavior on the part of the rebels that you are dealing with; it is a changed type of character, a real hatred and a resolute rebellion against you and all that you stand for. While this was not manifested by Lucifer at the first stages of his rebellion, these radically changed characters have grown up as the natural maturity of those first seeds of revolt; and these are the stubborn facts now confronting you and your loyal followers. Obviously, the law of the degeneracy of the character which follows from distrust and hatred of the Creator is as truly a natural law as any set of facts in physics or chemistry.

How are you going to manage the situation so as to retain the affectionate loyalty of the one group, and at the same time deal in the utmost mercy as well as justice with all those who stand in stubborn defiance of your power?

Probably nothing that you can possibly do now will serve to win over or change the hard, proud wills that have so

long cherished hatred and rebellion. They have by now matured their characters in complete antagonism to you and all your ways. But in dealing with them, in making the universe everlastingly safe for the loyal and true, you must so conduct the business that all will be convinced of your wisdom and goodness; also you will win over all who can possibly be won over to your side.

Evidently you will have to do something out of the ordinary to answer effectively the charge that, while you are particular and exacting as to all the laws of the universe, you yourself are safely above and outside all the sweat and grime of real life, eternally removed from all defiling contact with the degradation of sin and its horrible consequences.

Whatever plan you adopt must not only demonstrate your justice, goodness, and benevolence; but it must be of such a nature that, by the very act of seeing what you have done, a radical transformation of the entire character will be produced in the souls of all who will not stubbornly resist its transforming influence.[1]

III

But all this implies that you, as their creator, may have to descend to the very depths among your wretched, writhing, furious creatures, in order to accomplish all these varied objectives.

Are you willing to do this?

Would you be willing to lay aside your dignity, your accustomed power, and submit to the sordid limitations, the defiling contacts inevitable among a race of mutineers and degenerates?

[1] Of course, this is not the whole story. But it is the phase of the atonement which is of chief importance in the present discussion. This chapter is not an attempt at systematic theology. It must not be judged by what it omits.

The history of the Hebrew people shows how all this was actually done.

The following from a writer possessed of true philosophic grasp of the problems involved, gives us the salient outlines of what theology terms the incarnation:

"We marvel at the Saviour's sacrifice in exchanging the throne of heaven for the manger, and the companionship of adoring angels for the beasts of the stall. Human pride and self-sufficiency stand rebuked in His presence. Yet this was but the beginning of His wonderful condescension. It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.

"Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners. Yet into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss.

"The heart of the human father yearns over his son. He looks into the face of his little child, and trembles at the thought of life's peril. He longs to shield his dear one from Satan's power, to hold him back from temptation and con-

flict. To meet a bitterer conflict and a more fearful risk, God gave His only-begotten Son, that the path of life might be made sure for our little ones."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 48, 49.

If you were the king of eternity, how far would you permit your rebel, Lucifer, to go in a program like that?

If, when you came to earth and lived among men, you found your ancient enemy dogging your every step through childhood, youth, and manhood, would you be able to stick to the rules of the game, and live in all respects as a model human being, exercising none of your former divine power, but depending constantly upon the heavenly Father for every moral power and for every decision of life?

And when Lucifer finally stirred up the leaders of the Jews to connive with the Roman ruler to get you executed in a cruel way, would you not think it was about time to have this rebel forever disposed of?

IV

Yet Lucifer was not then disposed of, even when he had demonstrated to the entire onlooking universe that he was a fiend and a murderer. Doubtless this act of his in hounding the innocent Son of God to death must have settled many of the problems of the great controversy in the minds of the loyal angels and the inhabitants of other worlds. But the great rebellion, though now in its final stage, was still permitted to drag on, until other facts and principles should become clear to all.

Eddington, in speaking of the way in which time, like an ever-rolling stream, can flow only onward and never backward, quotes the line: "Nature has built our gears in such a way that they can never get into reverse." We may para-

phrase this by saying that the Creator has so planned our natures that, whenever we get out of harmony with His own character which He has implanted in us, we must always develop trouble and misery. Lucifer, by his conduct in persecuting the incarnate Messiah, was showing to all the universe what a degenerate, execrable fiend he had become. The awful moral breakdown which followed his career after his first rebellion in heaven has been a demonstration of the great truth that God's ways are best, and that every departure from them must result in misery and ever-increasing wickedness and woe.

Of course, even this as a "natural law" of the moral economy of the universe must be the result of the deliberate planning of the Creator. Yet who can blame Him if He has planned that thus it should always be? He is the author of all; He is the one who must constantly keep up the fund of life with which every one of His creatures operates. How can anyone complain if God has decreed that only in a certain way can happiness and peace be enjoyed? The ways in which He desires His beings to live are in complete accord with His own nature and His own character. Who can complain that He has planned for only such beings to be kept alive as His subjects and companions throughout eternity? How else could He avoid the hatred and disharmony now prevailing, how else plan for that perpetual love and peace so essential for the happiness of Himself and His beings for evermore?

V

In view of all the circumstances, you have decided that as their creator you must at some time descend into the arena with your creature, man, to share the toil, the temptation,

the misery of man's lot, partly to vindicate your character from Lucifer's charges, partly to win back as many of mankind as can thus be won.

But you must now decide on two other matters involved in this incarnation.

First, *when* is it to be? That is, at what stage in the history of mankind will it be best for you to take this place on earth? Secondly, what steps in the way of preparation will you need to take to make the best possible use of this your theophany, your amazing act of becoming manifest among men?

It is easy to see that the second of these answers must depend somewhat upon the first. The object to be attained in both cases is the best method of handling the sin problem. You must try to rescue some from the delusions and enchantments of their evil choices. But you must do it all in such a way as to clear your own reputation as the creator and manager of the universe; you must never employ deception or even the slightest coercion to win over any to your side; and you must settle this entire sin problem so that it will everlastingly stay settled.

Necessarily there must be definite and somewhat prolonged preparations made among mankind for what you are about to do. Anything like a sudden and unannounced appearance among the writhing, fuming, struggling masses of men would accomplish nothing. Besides, a proper announcement beforehand may prove almost as effectual in rescuing some from among men as will the historical record of it after it has been done. Both can be doubted, denied, indignantly rejected, by the determined will to disbelieve. But both before and after, you must strictly avoid any undue pressure, any coercion of the mind of men, any blazing out

upon them in your divine power and majesty. For this would result in an unfair measure of influence upon the mind, a violation of their eternal right of free moral choice. Decisions thus arrived at have little if any lasting value in the formation of a holy character; though Lucifer constantly employs fear, deception, and every imaginable form of chicanery and coercion to hold men in his ranks. But you, as the creator, must always maintain a nice balance between this danger of showing too much power and majesty among men, and the danger of proving ineffectual in your attempts at impressing those capable of being won over to the right side.

It is this principle, as we have seen, which will not permit you to allow the angels or spirit beings to have open access to the people of this earth. Whatever you allow the good angels to do, you must also permit the rebel angels to do as well. And as all angelic beings are greatly superior to human beings in their present mundane state, these angels would inevitably exert an undue amount of influence upon men and women in their choices of good or evil, if they should appear openly and visibly on all occasions among mankind. Besides, as human beings could hardly distinguish between the good and the bad among the spirits, their constant presence could not fail to confuse greatly the entire situation. Accordingly, it would seem best to permit these spirit beings to exercise their influence only out of sight, as it were, or essentially without the knowledge of the men and women involved in the ceaseless struggle with right and wrong.

In the system of ceremonies and sacrifices appointed among the Hebrews, we see some of the methods of preparation which the Creator actually did make for the incarnation. In the many specific prophecies which announced the

time, the place, and many attendant circumstances connected with it, we see other preparatory measures with a like design. Both the system of sacrifices and the predictive prophecies dealing with the Messiah's work become of very cogent evidential value when the Messiah actually does appear among men, performs the predicted kind of work, and dies in the manner described so long beforehand.

Similarly, the record of it all, after the incarnation has become a fact of history, is amply sufficient to accomplish its purpose. These evidences do not coerce the mind, as do the crass evidences of objective facts; they are evidences in the moral sphere, and there is always left the possibility that the will to disbelieve may reject them all. But for those who are determined to follow the Creator and be loyal to Him, the evidences for God's gracious dealings with mankind become ample and conclusive. For them there is no ambiguity in the evidence that Lucifer has proved himself a murderer and a fiend, by his hounding of the Son of God to death. Forever he stands discredited before the onlooking universe. His charges against the Creator's character are seen to be false and without the slightest foundation. The Creator has abundantly proved that He is willing to do everything possible for the good and the happiness of all His created intelligences.

> Hammer away, ye hostile hands,
> Your hammers break, God's anvil stands.

VI

It has never been the Creator's expectation that all mankind would ever be won over to the side of goodness and truth. At best a few only from each succeeding generation can be salvaged and stored away in graves of hope; the many

will always go their own fatuous way of selfishness and rebellion.

The great cosmic demonstration has now been in operation for a long time. It would seem that about all the points in the controversy must be quite well cleared up by this time, so far as the onlooking universe is concerned.

Would it not be about time to close out this great human laboratory, this long and painful biological history, and prepare to put the universe on a permanent basis of security and happiness?

But before we consider how this may best be done, we ought to study some of the lessons which have been learned from this sad experience of sin during the successive generations of mankind.

Chapter VII

THE VERDICT OF HISTORY

Some of the events in the long career of mankind may now be looked at from this new point of view as the outworking of a great cosmic experience or demonstration in the realm of morals or theology. For human history is divine philosophy teaching by examples; and the records of history become the eternal lesson book of the universe.

Perhaps in no other part of our general subject is it more difficult for us to see matters *cosmically,* that is, to study them from the point of view of the cosmos in general, than in this matter of the lessons from human history. We have all been more or less miseducated; and we are so prone to drag into such a study all the petty, narrow prejudices with which our minds have been filled during the years of a lifetime.

We must, if possible, discard all these preconceived notions, and must try to look at human history from the standpoint of eternity, *sub specie aeternitatis,* as the theologians express it. I mean, we need to re-evaluate all the events of history from the perspective of eternity, to look upon them as they will some day appear after this horrible adventure of sin is all in the past.

At that time we shall better appreciate the fact that the only thing that counts, the only thing that has ever counted, is the progress made in understanding and in settling the sin problem. This is the only reason why human history has been permitted at all, or why it is still prolonged. All individual and national events must be evaluated as they

contribute to or hinder this great objective. The long-drawn-out pageant of the rise and fall of empires, the kaleidoscopic changes in customs and national habits, are so many illustrations of the innate tendencies of the good or the evil, which have been planned or permitted for the education of the onlooking universe. For the lessons from the entire cosmic drama will become the textbook of redeemed men and angels during the rest of eternity.

II

Some of the cosmic problems thus to be illustrated are: Has the Creator been wise and just in planning the "natural" effects of life to work out in this or that particular way? Why was the career of such and such a man or such a nation cut off as it was? Or was it fair to permit such a person or such a nation to survive for so long a time, all the while exerting an evil influence over innocent or misguided people? What was the harm of such and such a custom of society? Are all the laws of God the best possible ways for the guidance of human life? Or might not some slight deviations therefrom be permissible under some circumstances? Is it not a species of cosmic slavery for intelligent beings, gifted with reason and free will, to submit themselves implicitly to God's moral guidance all the time, even as the unthinking protoplasmic cells do in a physical way, or as the birds and insects and other animals do in their habits which we call instincts? Where is there any semblance of justice in punishing one innocent man (Jesus) and letting a million guilty men go free? In short, how do the events of human history justify all the ways and laws of God, and *pari passu* discredit and condemn the ways of the great rebel and all his followers?

You, as the creator, allowed the great rebellion to become transferred to this world largely for the purpose of exposing its true inwardness by means of its natural effects on the life of mankind. The depraving nature of sin (or of rebellion in any form), its corroding and degenerating effects on all the varied aspects of the moral character, could best be illustrated among human beings who are perpetuated by indirect creation through many successive generations. These depraving effects could be demonstrated during the successive generations of mankind in a multitude of ways which would never have been possible among the angels. Also the demoralizing effects of rebellion upon Lucifer himself and his angels could best be shown by the ways in which they conducted themselves toward the human race, when the latter came under their influence or control.

No one can blame you for planning these sequences of cause and effect as a means of illustrating to the entire universe the radical difference between the methods of the great rebel and those under which you would have conducted the universe otherwise. You have given him a fair chance and an open field; what sort of system of ethics has resulted from Lucifer's methods of lying and deception, of coercion and cruelty, when worked out during the long laboratory course of human history?

No one but a fool would expect you as the creator to plan matters in such a way that selfishness and rebellion would be followed naturally by peace and prosperity, or that sin in any form would ever result in permanent blessing and happiness. All the laws of the universe are a unity, and all are the result of your planning. But the moral and spiritual laws connected with ethical conduct are as truly "natural," as inevitable and unchangeable, as are any laws governing

the movements of the planets or the chemical combinations of the elements. Hence the history of mankind has become only a gigantic demonstration of how the moral laws of the universe work out on a cosmic scale. Is every form of wrongdoing always depraving and harmful? Will each and every form of evil, when harbored in the soul, tend to spread like a moral cancer and contaminate all the rest of the character? Is this why those who were once holy and happy in heaven have degenerated into murderers and everything that is vile and repulsive? When these truths have become truisms for the universe, then it will be time to say that the great moral laboratory experiment must be near its completion.

III

Nor can any thoughtful person criticize you, as the creator, for manipulating all the events in the life of mankind in such a way as to bring out these and other lessons for the instruction of the onlooking universe. For the entire program has been worked out with absolute justice, in the strictly scientific way of cause and effect always following each other in natural sequence, and yet all the time with absolute free will for every intelligent being, including even the rebels and their dupes among mankind. This is the marvel of it all. But the abysmal difference between right and wrong lines of conduct, between right and wrong beliefs and ideals, has been clearly shown by the events in the history of the human race. Accordingly, whenever you decide to close out this big experiment with evil which Lucifer started long ago, all the various phases of the controversy between you and your rebellious subjects will have been clearly and conclusively settled.

This matter of free will is one of the radical differences

between your method of government and that initiated by the rebels. Your entire government is founded on mutual sympathy and confidence between all men, coupled with absolute moral freedom for each of all the millions of your intelligent beings. Their power of choice is no make-believe. Your universe is one of law and order, both physically and ethically; but moral freedom is much more than a mere gesture before the universe. You allow evil spirits and evil men to have their own way within wide limits, to illustrate the natural outworkings of such lines of conduct, so that others may take warning from the evil as well as learn to imitate the good. The only kind of allegiance you have ever asked for, in fact the only kind of obedience which you will recognize, is that which springs from loving loyalty, from intelligent and affectionate choice.

On the other hand, Lucifer from the beginning loudly boasted that his plan was to give the angels (and later mankind) much greater liberty, much greater freedom, with no laws or restrictions to hamper anyone. Like one of his later followers, Mikhail Bakunin, the famous Russian nihilist, his motto for everyone was: "Let your own happiness be your only law." Yet whenever these anarchistic policies have been actually put into operation, the crass folly of such a course has been clearly displayed. For whenever Lucifer and his crowd became thwarted and could not carry out their plans in any other way, they have always resorted to compulsion and force, to cruelties and wrongs; which proves that to follow him is to accept the rule of the most fiendish of tyrants.

And the wonder of all the universe is that the real Creator has allowed these fiends and their followers such freedom in their evil course for so long a time.

IV

These characteristics of Lucifer's system have been demonstrated in many ways all down the history of the race. Since all the waywardness of men and of nations may justly be assigned to the policies of the original rebel, who by seduction became the leader of mankind, we may see the plan of the evil one. And ethics and ideals are as truly subject to laws of cause and effect as are the phenomena of chemistry and physics.

In the early days of the race, when Lucifer's methods were in their prime and were as yet but little discredited by lessons from the past, some of the most outstanding traits among men and nations were the despotic arrogance and incredible cruelty displayed by almost all those who were able to seize power over their fellow men. Typical of those early times is the boast of Darius I, one of the outstanding Persian kings, as found in the Behistun inscription. He tells how he treated one of his subordinate rulers who had given him trouble: "I cut off his nose and ears, I cut out his tongue, and I put out his eyes. At my court he was kept in chains; all the people saw him. Later I crucified him." The monumental records of the ancient East horrify and disgust us with their boastings about captive kings who were tortured to death in the presence of onlooking multitudes, while entire cities and districts were wiped out of existence with every imaginable outrage and cruelty.

Some people of our day seem disposed to say that the human race has evolved beyond such practices. This is inaccurate. It would be more correct to say that the race has learned some lessons about such matters, at least theoretically. Today only abnormal and depraved minds can admire such conduct. In our modern times an attempted revival

of this "frightfulness" on the part of some nations in a life-and-death struggle served largely to unite the rest of the world against such international practices. Still more recently, when certain national leaders began to rant against the Christian virtues of mercy and kindliness and altruism, telling their people to become "hard" and to develop instead the fearsome characters of the "superman," the rest of the world have not displayed any profound admiration for such advice nor for such ideology when put into practice.

The reflective part of mankind have learned, at least in the abstract, that nothing can justify these cruel methods and these "superman" characters, even from the point of view of national safety. War of any and every kind has had the false halo of glory pretty well stripped from it in recent years. So long as we live in a world of evil and designing men, forces of restraint may be necessary, as when policemen have to check a burglary or an attempted murder or put down a riot. Similarly a war may sometimes be unavoidable, like a major surgical operation; but all such operations are only the lesser of two evils. The older habit of praising war and military conquest for their own sakes, after the style of the ancient Assyrians or Persians, has been seemingly quite outgrown. Many millions of our day seem to have learned, at least theoretically, that instead of might and force being worthy of admiration as the chief ideals of national and international life, the lessons of the Man of Nazareth are instead altogether desirable and lovely—if we could only contrive to practice them ourselves, and could induce all the rest of mankind to practice them.

It is something for the race to have learned the ideal way of life, even though very few seem successful in putting these lofty ideals into practice. All national organizations

are still quite pagan, perhaps always will necessarily be such in this world of sin and violence. In the picturesque figures used in the prophecies of the Bible, nations and governments are represented as wild beasts. The official language of modern governments will scarcely admit that the Christian ideals are even to be aimed at *nationally;* Machiavellianism is still the sinister code; nations still regard self-aggrandizement as the first law of national policy, and seem determined to overreach their neighbor or to have the pound of flesh whenever possible. Even in individual life too many professing Christians seem to become discouraged in trying to translate Christ's ideals into daily living. Yet it is certainly something for mankind in general to have become convinced of the desirableness of these ideals. And the way in which they have become thus convinced has been partly at least brought about by seeing the horrible results of Lucifer's methods of compulsion and cruelty, as displayed on every page of the history of the race.

If in our day great groups of people have become discouraged with democratic schemes of government, and have reverted to various forms of despotism as the only way of maintaining orderly civic life and international existence, it seems almost self-evident that these modern despotisms would never dare to imitate the practices so typical of all the despotic governments which controlled the races of mankind during its early centuries and millenniums.

But we need not plume ourselves because of the "progress" that the race has made in these respects. There is not the slightest evidence that the race as such has outgrown any of its "aboriginal cussedness," as Dr. E. A. Hooton has termed man's tendency to evil. The history of the Jews is full of warnings against any such false optimism. For in-

stance, in their early history the Israelites were continually falling into idolatry. But after long centuries of this form of evil, the experience of the Babylonian captivity seemed to cure them. Never again did they lapse into their former idol worship. Yet it was at the very height of their complacency over having outgrown this besetting sin, that the Jews rejected and crucified their long-looked-for Messiah. And in one more generation, under the wild fanaticism of a false messianism, they became guilty of the unspeakable atrocities which accompanied their resistance to the Romans in the siege of Jerusalem. Obviously their seeming victory over idolatry proved to be no guarantee against their falling into equally low depths in other directions. They seemed to have gained on one point; but they utterly failed on other points fully as vital. And thus it is and has always been in the case of the world as a whole. The world is in no respect outgrowing its evil; it is hopelessly diseased in mind and in soul; and nothing but a supernatural intervention on the part of the Creator Himself can change this constant tendency toward degeneracy and ruin.

V

Closely connected with these ancient despotisms is the subject of slavery. A slaveowner is a despot on a small scale, while a despot is a slaveowner on a large scale. Both belong to those older days when might made right, when it was considered quite the proper thing "that they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can."

Slavery seems to have existed almost universally among mankind for several thousands of years. The most enlightened of the Greek philosophers could not imagine a world

or a civilized society without slaves to give financial security and cultured leisure to the lucky few; and they justified this custom by saying that only thus could certain favored ones have the time and the ambition to advance the culture and the intellectual life of the race. The gilded apex of the pyramid of ancient culture and civilization was always supported by the tears and groans of myriads of unfortunates, who constituted the invisible mudsills of society. The Hebrew people partially tolerated slavery, yet they made it end automatically every seven years, and in many other ways they mitigated the cruel harshness of the custom as prevalent among the surrounding nations. No other ideals seem to have been known to the world at large until the Master Himself came, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Modern peoples are fond of boasting that we have abolished human slavery. The truth seems to be that we have changed the form, but have not outgrown the practice. Our complex civilization still preserves this ancient institution, though in more impalpable and more unmanageable forms. Modern industrial conditions have literally enslaved millions; for any man who is helplessly dependent upon another man or set of men for the chance to work and thus to eat and live, is obviously a slave. This applies as much to the white-collared subordinate officers of our huge industrial enterprises as to those who toil with grimy hands and sweaty brows, for all alike are in the grip of complex conditions over which they have little or no control and from which they know not how to escape. Nor are these modern industrial slaves any more inclined to be reconciled to their thralldom, because their chains are economic and impersonal, instead of physical. How these modern forms of oppression

and injustice may possibly be remedied or at least mitigated is a problem which is occupying the attention of some of the best minds of our day.

If you were the creator you would be loudly blamed today for tolerating these modern forms of oppression, even as you tolerated but never approved the ancient. But both the ancient and the modern forms should rather be attributed to the innate evil of human nature; they are the natural outcome of Lucifer's primal revolt and anarchy, when confronted with the complex conditions of civilized life. In all ages the great rebel's policies and ideology have resulted in the exaltation of the few at the expense of the many. Today some people defend this modern form of industrial slavery with the same old fallacious argument of the ancient Greeks, that our civilization could not get along without these industrial conditions. Then there must be something radically wrong with our modern civilization. For the chains of industrial slavery are none the less real because they are the invisible compulsions of economic life, none the less galling and infuriating because they are largely impersonal and all but beyond the amelioration and the remedying of any human plan.

But the laws of truth and justice have remained the same. Men may become lost amid the ethical mazes of our artificial civilization; but the North Pole is still in the same place. Men may seek to rationalize their greed and selfishness; but anyone who takes advantage of another's misfortune in order to enrich himself, or who seeks to profit through another's helplessness or stupidity, is as truly a slave master at heart as any of the old lords of Assyria or Rome. Minority stockholders in a large corporation, the management of which seems quite beyond their control, may at least have it to

say that their slaves are out of their sight; but I cannot see how it is right to profit by the wrongdoing of others under any circumstances. Certainly the verdict of history, when viewed from the standpoint of eternity, will be that the modern form of slavery is as wrong and as unjust as was the ancient.

VI

The history of polygamy is much like that of slavery. Woman, by her biological function as the bearer of children, has always been in a position of more or less dependence upon man. But this dependence has too often been exploited by those who had the power, with the result that among most of the ancient races the men had as many women as they could obtain or support. Perhaps the latter term is not the appropriate one; for often among the ancients, as among some of the modern races of Africa, the women supported the men. They were assets, instead of liabilities; they were the manual workers; hence the more women a man had the richer he was. Thus greed and laziness became contributory to lust in the perpetuation of polygamy, with its long and diversified train of evils and miseries.

In our day the generality of mankind have outgrown neither the greed, the laziness, nor the lust. There is not the slightest evidence that the race as a whole is making any progress in outgrowing these propensities—though often some other overpowering vice, like pride or avarice, may tend to keep the more specific animal sins in abeyance. But our modern systems of easy divorce, with the accompanying "tandem polygamy," are not much superior to the ancient customs; and multitudes in America or Europe today would doubtless revert easily to the more ancient practice of open polygamy if the *mores* of modern society would not

be set against them. Yet the world has learned at least theoretically, that the original plan of the Creator of one man for one woman is the best and the only proper way of family life.

VII

The greatly enlarged knowledge of human physiology and scientific dietetics which we have acquired in recent years has taught those who are willing to face the facts the many inherent evils in the use of alcohol, tobacco, and all stimulants and narcotics. Yet how few even among the scientifically educated are willing to put a curb on their perverted appetites, and live physically as they know they ought to live, in the light of their duty to their Creator! Probably most modern men would be ashamed to make a living by the traffic in rum or narcotics, not to mention the traffic in slaves, as some prominent churchmen of three hundred years ago used to do, and thought nothing of it. Some enlightened standards now prevail, even if the majority are probably deterred from similar practices today more by the pressure of public opinion than from any inward urge of oughtness or of loyalty to their Creator. For the habits and customs of society in all parts of the world do not warrant us in thinking that any great majority of the race have outgrown their slavery to selfish indulgence, even though they may know that such indulgences are at the cost of health and happiness, and, in many cases, of a shortening of life itself.

Thus we might go on indefinitely through the entire gamut of social institutions, customs, and personal habits. Sufficient objective data have been developed by the experience of mankind to inform all who are willing to learn what is the right and the wrong on all these points. It is not to be

expected that the race as a whole will ever be cured of their evil habits and customs; this has never been the working program of the Manager of the universe. It is sufficient if a select few, the few who are determined to be loyal and true to their Creator, have learned the true lessons on all these points from the sad experience of the race. Then in the future ages these lessons from the sad experience of mankind will become an everlasting safeguard against any further dabbling with the horrible thing called sin.

Speak, History! Who are Life's victors? Unroll thy long annals and say;
Are they those whom the world calls the victors, who won the success of a day?
The martyrs, or Nero? The Spartans who fell at Thermopylae's tryst,
Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges or Socrates? Pilate or Christ?

—*William Wetmore Story.*

VIII

When looked at in the perspective of time, human history is seen to be largely a seesaw between the demoralizing, degenerating effects of sin in all its forms (growing out of a determination on the part of individuals not to keep on terms with their Creator), and the counterworking of the Ruler of the universe, who repeatedly brings about a new human ensemble more favorable for the spread of divine truth and the development of right characters. Moral diseases and wounds are followed by a divine healing process to counteract and restore what has been lost. During all these kaleidoscopic changes, the agents of evil have constantly employed falsehood, trickery, fear, and cruel coercion, with every other imaginable form of wrongdoing; while

God by His very nature has ever been obliged to use only open and fair methods, with absolute free will for rebels and loyalists alike.

Often it has seemed to take hundreds of years to show up and eliminate certain evils which have fastened themselves on national and social life. To the impatient observer it has too often seemed that truth has indeed been forever on the scaffold, and wrong forever on the throne. In reality the Great Avenger has never been "careless;" the tediousness in the vindication of truth has been due to the necessity of managing the human laboratory in such a way as to produce honest and lasting results. For "though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small."

The employment of force and oppression against God's loyal people by those who openly scoff at God and all righteousness has not usually had any harmful or deceiving influence which God has had to counteract. Such methods carry their own condemnation. More subtle and difficult to overcome has been the favorite method of evil in working under some pious camouflage, professing to aim at good and righteous objectives, but employing crooked or unjust methods in the professed interests of high aims. Most deceptive of all has been a brilliant ecclesiasticism, which gradually grew into a world power, and for long centuries posed as the true incarnation of God's character and methods, though being in reality only a clever travesty of everything divine. For long ages this ecclesiastic counterfeit seemed enthroned in the temple of God, with nothing effective on the part of God's truth to expose its claims or to counteract its world-wide miasmic influence.

Slowly and with often painful setbacks the saving truth of God was brought out to the admiration of the world.

Time and again this has occurred locally, or on a small scale; but there has usually been a sufficient taint of falsehood remaining in high places to prove that it is only a few scattered individuals whom God can induce to become loyal. The great mass of the powers of earth persist in remaining under the hypnotic spell of the wicked one.

Finally, in very modern times, by means of the spread of general education and a great profusion of scientific discoveries, and especially through the agencies of quick communication which can make these discoveries common property all over the world, such as the telegraph, the radio, and the newspapers, the world has been transformed from a conglomerate of separate units into one vast community. This world community is not by any means a harmonious unit, so far as opinions or interests are concerned; but it is a unit in the sense that there is a common knowledge of what is going on everywhere; and all this is tending more and more to the formation of a world opinion on many points of religion and what we may term common-sense philosophy. Thus it might well seem that truth and justice are destined to be at last recognized, this time on a world-wide scale.

But alas, the intellectual and moral common denominator of the world mass can be no higher or truer than the status and interests of the average individual composing this world mass; and this average is certainly not Christian in spirit or in motive. Besides, a perverse interpretation of nature's message for us, coupled with a twisted view of all the meaning of life, has again become almost universal; and, as an intolerant, arrogant orthodoxy, it is again running true to form in seeking to smother out every struggling expression of the real truth of God. This modern, world-wide apostasy, in the very face of all the material comforts and the amazing

scientific discoveries of our day, is a clear proof that the human race can never be redeemed by mere intellectual knowledge or material progress. The final act in the great cosmic drama has not yet been announced; but the stage setting is being rapidly prepared, and this final act seems to be the next on the program.

When this final enthronement of wrong takes place, when truth again stands upon the scaffold,—this time not on any small, provincial scale, but before the unified world,—the powers in command will be equipped with all the apparatus and the skilled technique of modern publicity. They can easily smother out the last protesting cries of those about to be sacrificed. Would it not appear that the hopelessness of the disease called sin has been sufficiently demonstrated before the onlooking universe, and that the time has fully come for you as the creator to close out the great cosmic experiment?

Does anyone who is familiar with the modern trends dare deny that the world is rapidly and inevitably being stampeded into an attitude of mind where scenes like those of ancient Rome will again be re-enacted? William Watson has drawn the picture for us:

> Darkening the azure roof of Nero's world,
> From smoldering Rome the smoke of ruin curled;
> And the fierce populace went clamoring—
> "These Christian dogs, 'tis they have done this thing!"
> So to the wild wolf Hate were sacrificed
> The panting, huddled flock whose crime was Christ.

But this time the outcome is going to be different. This time the church is not to be abandoned, but will be delivered bodily from her insensate enemies.

IX

The multifarious devices of civil government, which occupy so much of the time and energy of mole-eyed mortals, have never been of major interest to you as the creator. They are only so many social devices for enabling human beings to live together in more or less peace and security. They have been of varying degrees of efficiency for these purposes; and no one form of government can be said to be absolutely and at all periods of time better than all others. Even the worst forms of despotism are preferable to sheer anarchy. It has always been true that a benevolent despotism is in many ways preferable to a "democracy" of degenerates and reprobates; and a choice between the latter and some form of autocracy seems to be the hard alternative now confronting many parts of the world. "The mobs of great cities," said Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, "add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the strength of the human body." The witty Voltaire used to say that he would rather be eaten by one lion than by a thousand rats; yet in the past it has been only in the darker days of human history that intelligent, freedom-loving peoples like those of Europe and America have been confronted with such a choice. But the world is rapidly outgrowing the notion that there is anything sacrosanct about democratic forms of government. Instead the conviction is growing that many peoples and communities are almost incapable of rational and efficient self-government. Wherever or whenever such a condition prevails, that is, whenever the individuals themselves have lost the power of self-control and of subordinating their selfish interests to the general good of the community, then the sooner such a pseudo democracy is displaced by some form of intelligent and

benevolent autocracy, the more efficiently will public business be conducted.

But efficiency of public business may be purchased at too high a cost. Autocracy may be efficient; but it has its own evils, though these are different from those of a weak and degenerate democracy. Nor is the chief evil of autocracy its suppression of social and civil liberty; rather is it the crushing of initiative, the strangulation of freedom of thinking, above all the regimentation of ethics and religion which such an autocracy always involves. Occasionally there have been efficient yet benevolent despotisms, from the days of Hammurabi and Queen Hatshepsut down to those of Napoleon and Bismarck. I see little to choose between such enlightened despotisms and that of the modern, standardized crowd, where individual thinking and soul liberty can be smothered out quite as effectively as under any emperor or Caesar. For surely ancient Babylon in all its dreary desolation is not so horrible a sight as that of human liberty in ruins.

While every friend of his species must mourn the passing of true freedom which he sees going on around him in the world, we may be thankful that the universe has witnessed one historical demonstration on a large scale of the high and noble results which always follow in the wake of civil and religious liberty. Liberty and opportunity are unsurpassed conditions for developing the minds and the spirits of those who know how to use them aright. Yet the inward blight of evil and rebellion—of sin in any of its forms—will always spoil the best of opportunities; and the inevitability of sin in a world of free will must always preclude the world as a whole from accomplishing anything of permanent value in the way of civil society.

But in this boasted march of wrong and error,
'Mid the vast splendor of an age that glows,
One thing, O Jesus, fills my heart with terror:
The echo of Thy voice still feebler grows!
—*Victor Hugo.*

X

It would almost seem as if, by your manipulation of the life of mankind (all without the slightest infringement of the free will of anyone, saint or sinner, angel or demon), the more important principles in the cosmic controversy have already been quite well worked out by the experiences of human society. If any important problems still remain untested or in doubt, they are probably of a sort which have to do with proving the utter hopelessness of curing the sin of the race as a whole, the sheer impossibility of curing even the majority of mankind of their innate selfishness and their enmity against the Creator and all His methods and laws. Probably these latter points can be further worked out in the closing scenes of earth's history, when you have decided that it is time to close out the great controversy.

It is quite unnecessary for us to think that all the people of earth will ever learn the lessons developed by the history of the race. Nothing in the Bible or in the science of human life points to this as probable or as even possible. It will suffice for your purpose as their creator, if some few in all ages and in all climes have shown their devoted loyalty under every conceivable condition of seduction and temptation. They may know but little about the cosmic aspects of the great rebellion and its train of evil results. They may have learned little about the lessons from the experience of the race. There will be plenty of time in the future state for them to get this interesting and yet mere intellectual

knowledge. It is sufficient that they are now in a frame of mind to remain loyal under any condition, and able by their regenerated characters to recognize these lessons later on, or when they have opportunity to study the history of mankind at leisure under the more favorable conditions of the future immortal state.

But the onlooking universe already see the meaning of all these matters. Long ago they were convinced by the logic of events that Lucifer's plans and theories have all gone wrong, that his charges against you, the creator, have all proved false. Lucifer and all his ways stand forever discredited before the entire universe. The devious ways of the archrebel and his followers, the demoralizing effects of sin upon both angels and human beings, the utter preposterousness of the idea that the universe could be conducted along the lines suggested by the great rebel—all these matters are now clear, in the light of the long, painful history of mankind. It was all this that Jesus meant when on the cross He cried: "It is finished." The turning point in the sin problem had been reached. The ultimate doom of Lucifer and all his works, the everlasting vindication of the Creator, of His character and His methods of managing the universe, were then made sure. And all the subsequent two thousand years of human history have been necessary only in order to close out the cosmic business in an orderly way, and to gather out of the wreck of mankind all who are capable of being made fit for eternity.

But now that the final chapters of the great cosmic demonstration are about to be completed, it is time for human history to take another turn. What that turn will be, we must now consider.

Chapter VIII

HOW LONG WOULD YOU TOLERATE A REBELLION?

I FEEL confident that my reader's answer to this question would be briefly about as follows: I would tolerate such a condition only long enough to get the universe out of it in a safe and good way. All intelligent beings would need to become thoroughly convinced that such a rebellion is a bad thing, a very bad thing. They would also need to be convinced that I, their creator, have handled the entire situation with justice, mercy, and eminent good sense. But as soon as all these ends could be accomplished, I would feel obliged to close out the whole affair, and have a complete house cleaning of the universe which I have made.

Something like this, I believe, would be the decision of every right-thinking person. In our varying degrees of finite judgment we might not all agree on all the details of how these ends could best be accomplished; but we would all be agreed on the general aim to be attained.

From the evidence at our command it seems certain that the real Creator is engaged on such a program. For us to doubt that He is working to get this horrible mess of sin and misery over with as soon as consistent with doing a thorough and lasting job of it, would be to charge with unaccountable folly or perverseness a Being who, on countless evidences throughout His creation, is manifestly wise and good, and also abundantly able to do as He thinks best, except as He has constantly to deal with the choices of free moral beings whom He has created.

All is of God that is, and is to be;
And God is good. Let this suffice us still,
Resting in Christlike trust upon His will,
Who moves to His great ends, unthwarted by the ill.

II

Some may say that time is nothing to an almighty Creator.

In one sense this is true. Yet time is precious, it is everything, when millions of beings are in the welter and pain of indescribable misery. Besides,—and few ever stop to think of this side of the case,—the Creator Himself is suffering most keenly. "In all their affliction He was afflicted." It must always be the case that suffering on the part of the creature will bring suffering and anxiety to the Being who created him—if the latter is the kind of Being which our religion tells us He is.

Much useless discussion has been indulged in by trying to create distinctions between "retributive" and "natural" and other grades or kinds of punishment for wrongdoing. All such distinctions must be only partial, arbitrary, and mostly useless. For the simple reason that every cause-and-effect arrangement throughout the universe must be due to the deliberate planning of the Creator. The "laws" of nature, and all physical as well as moral "consequences" both now and hereafter, can have no other origin. There can be no other possible origin for any penalty which follows wrongdoing except the will or the decree of the Eternal—unless we adopt the heathenish and unreasonable notion that the matter of the universe is eternal, and that it has in itself some unmanageable quality or property which the Creator Himself cannot quite manage as He desires.

If some sort of evil consequence (or "punishment") must always follow wrongdoing or "sin," this punishment must

follow as long as the sin exists. Yet sin, as has been remarked, is about the only perpetual motion that has ever been invented. Like a big boulder rolling down a mountainside, it gathers momentum every second of its career. Hence you as the creator would seem to be shut up to only one course: you can terminate the suffering only by terminating the sin, which is its cause; and you can terminate the sin only by terminating the sinner. This of course applies only to those rebels who refuse to be cured of their evil ways.

From all this it follows that the Creator has plenty of reasons for not unnecessarily prolonging the present situation. The inevitable end of sin must be death. I mean literally *death;* for a wise and good Creator cannot be expected to tolerate a cosmic rebellion to all eternity. Yet this sad but inevitable termination of such a rebellion makes it necessary for the Creator to deal wisely and justly with even those who must finally be destroyed.

III

This delicate business of handling and closing out a cosmic rebellion must be done decently and in order. The universal scale on which this affair is being enacted can make no difference with the principles involved. The fact that the rebellion started with a group of angels who had been directly created, and that it spread to this earth, where the long-drawn-out processes of indirect or biologic creation are going on, may seem to complicate the situation; but in reality the basic principles remain exactly as they were from the beginning. A cosmic rebellion is under way. It has already assumed vast proportions. And it has within its very nature a horrible self-perpetuating tendency. Like a horrible

cosmic cancer, it must be recognized for the evil thing it is; and it must be dealt with wisely and firmly.

You will doubtless decide that the following objects must be attained:

1. Your entire management of the business of the universe must be such as can be vindicated; your methods must be such that the onlooking universe will see them to be the only wise and good methods by which the affair could be handled. All of your free intelligences must become convinced of this before the matter can be considered settled.

2. The charges against your character as creator, charges that you are unjust, arbitrary, cruel, must be cleared up before the entire universe. The natural laws which you as creator have established, whether they be such as the laws of heredity for the control of organisms, or those moral and spiritual laws which have to do with the management of good and evil actions through what we term cause and effect —all these physical and moral laws must be vindicated and shown to be wise and good.

3. One of the chief objects to be attained through this biological process which we term human life will be the harvesting of a sufficient number of worth-while beings to whom you may safely entrust eternal life. The crop thus harvested may seem small; and it must be harvested out of a vast wastage, from a horrible welter of sin and suffering. But you are the only one to decide the conditions on which endless life shall be bestowed; for you are their creator. And you are the one who must put up with them through all eternity, and must be perpetually supplying them with life and all they have and all they are. Who else is to decide the kind of beings to whom you are to give this priceless boon of immortal life? Only the being who is responsible

for their existence, who will have to underwrite their characters and their future behavior, can be the judge of the qualifications necessary to make this future life a success.

The creator alone is entitled to say who have proved sufficiently loyal to be safely entrusted with immortal life. And when a sufficient number of this worth-while sort have been produced to make up the desired quota, I suppose that you will decide to have the long turmoil of sin and suffering brought to an end.

IV

The termination of the sin program here on earth has been variously named by Christian people. It has been called the judgment day, the end of probation, the second coming of Christ, the end of the age, and by various other names. Each of these titles is more or less partial, and designates only one or more aspects of the reality. But however we may designate it, we can readily see that some such termination of human history must occur sometime. An ancient Greek philosopher is credited with the declaration that if there were no God, it would be necessary for statesmen to invent one. Similarly, we may say that, if there were no specific announcement in the Bible of such an event as the second coming of Christ or the judgment day, it would be logically necessary for us to look for such an event as the only possible or proper method of terminating the present cosmic predicament.

The problem now naturally arises, How would you proceed to close out the history of the rebellious race of human beings with wisdom and fairness to all?

An end to this present biological process of ceaseless births and deaths would have to be planned for some time and in

some way. It is quite unthinkable that the present human conditions should be prolonged indefinitely into the future. Common sense tells us that the present turmoil of suffering and death must at best be but a temporary expedient in a universe made and managed by a wise and good God. We might by a figure of speech think of the present condition of human beings as only the embryonic stage of what men may become when their period of probation is completed. But the qualifications for emergence out of the present stage into the next stage must be based on character development, not upon mere physical nor even intellectual points. Under the present system of existence, individual beings come to the end of their probation at death, after which they remain in safe storage until the resurrection.

But how would you manage to close out the present biological history of the race, while people are still being born and are dying all the time?

V

In a previous chapter we learned that the human race was not created first. The angels or spirits were made first; and human beings were brought into existence only subsequently, not as an afterthought, but as part of the eternal plan of God for working out the cosmic problem of moral evil or rebellion. The inherent sufferings and death inevitable as the results of sin could not well be demonstrated among the angels, who are not subject to the vicissitudes of successive generations under biological law; they could far better be illustrated by the prolonged processes of human biology. But these results are now pretty well understood. And it follows that when these problems of good and evil have been sufficiently worked out before the onlooking uni-

verse, it will be the time to bring to a close this human process of endless multiplication, sin, and death.

But from the facts now available, it has become clear that the time can never come when all human beings will become loyal. The free choice which you have granted them seems to ensure that a percentage, large or small, will always refuse your best plans for their reconciliation. The history of the race proves that, despite your best efforts, the percentage who develop into loyal subjects and thus fit candidates for eternity will always be discouragingly small. Hence it is wholly unthinkable that anything like one hundred per cent of any generation will ever become what you demand of them, under the conditions of free moral choice. The full Christianization of the entire race of mankind is a fond dream, without a shred of fact or of probability in its support. Accordingly, how are you to plan to close up this biological process of human history?

Obviously, nothing but a sudden catastrophic end of the chapter can be devised. How otherwise could anyone plan a termination of human history, if the race of rebels is to keep on multiplying biologically, and the new ones born will always show a percentage of mutineers and rebels? Nothing but a violent or catastrophic termination is possible for such a situation; for there could never be a "natural" end of the cosmic rebellion, under such a condition of free will and the never-ending multiplication of sinners.

VI

Since you must plan to bring an abrupt end to this miserable human program, how will you bring it about with the least violence and the most manifest justice to all?

I think you would have to plan to bring some simple,

easily comprehended test before the entire world, and have all people take their sides. By thus reining up the entire race before some easily understood, clear-cut issue, something that could be made to apply over all the world at the same time and in the same way, you might bring about a clear division between the loyal ones and the rebels; and thus a catastrophic end of the race could be effected with less hardship and less confusion than in any other way.

But for such an arrangement to work at all adequately, it would seem necessary to have a careful preparation made beforehand, so as to bring all the world of mankind into something like a unified state, one world-extensive community, such as we see now taking place under the operation of our modern methods of quick communication—the telegraph, the telephone, the radio.

Hitherto the policy of the Creator seems to have been to segregate men into small groups called nations or language units, thus forestalling the possibility of any soul-crushing despotism on a world-wide scale. This policy seems to have started near the dawn of human history, with the event called the confusion of tongues or the great dispersion, though this segregation of men into nations has been at the expense of many cultural and economic advantages which a world unity might have offered. This separation of the tribes and races has been allowed for thousands of years, and has resulted in preventing any one delusion or one religio-civil despotism from enslaving the entire human race.

But now this policy on your part will need to be reversed, as a preparation for the climax of human history; and you will need to allow the entire race to coalesce into a world community, a great world family (perhaps a wrangling

family, however), so that by a unified method of dealing with them you may close up human history in a dignified and yet just manner, a manner which will meet with the approval of all the onlooking universe.

Since men are as prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward, it may seem inevitable that this world unity of the race will result in some hideous falsehood's becoming almost universal; then, under the influence of mob hysteria (the "mob" being now the entire world), the majority will unite against the loyal few who persist in remaining faithful to you and your program. Those who are out of step with the crowd because they are listening to a different drummer will always be misunderstood, maligned, and candidates for martyrdom. And when this occurs on a world-wide scale, the onlooking universe may decide that it is about time to close out the experiment which Lucifer initiated so long ago, since these final loyalists are obviously in a fair way to be treated as was their Master two millenniums ago.

The *modus operandi* of bringing the actual end would doubtless be to rescue the loyal ones bodily from their insensate persecutors at the critical moment, and remove them bodily from the earth; then an end could be made of the remainder in some quick and suitable manner. Probably if the Creator should withdraw all restraint, allowing the fierce passions of the wicked to rage unleashed and unrestrained, those who were left on the earth after the rescue of the righteous would soon destroy one another. The wild, senseless way in which the three factions of the Jews in the siege of Jerusalem under Titus spent every breathing spell in trying to kill off one another, is a vivid illustration of what humanity would resort to if the restraining Spirit of God were entirely withdrawn from the earth. The carnage

and destruction would end only when the last man was dead.

Of course, this destruction of the rebels would not be their final end. All must again at some future time be brought forth from the storage of the grave (after having been judged and sentenced), to receive their final doom.

Such it seems to me would be the most sensible, the most fair and equable manner in which the affairs of the human race could be wound up and the great rebellion be brought to a termination.

VII

But another problem is intimately bound up with this final end of human affairs. This is the question of how much knowledge of "nature" and how much power over its mighty resources you are going to allow men to acquire.

Knowledge of nature means power; and power in the hands of evil men implies dangers fully as great as any benefits which this knowledge may give to good men. We must never forget that submarines and depth bombs, machine guns and mustard gas, are as truly symbolic of scientific progress as are airplanes and the radio. In fact this mystery which we call the radio is now being used to guide pilotless airplanes miles away, which might easily drop destruction and ruin over distant cities. If you as the kindly creator are to foster a knowledge of nature in such a way as to bring about desirable scientific discoveries, how in fairness to all concerned are you to refuse to allow designing men to make use of this increased knowledge in such ways as to make millions of people utterly miserable, and put many more millions in their graves?

So both aspects of this increased power over nature must be considered. And both sides of this matter need to be taken into consideration when you decide at what stage of

human history this greatly advanced knowledge of nature is to be fostered or allowed. It is silly for anyone to think that man alone by his sheer brains and ingenuity has worked up all these modern scientific discoveries and inventions. Nothing of the sort would ever have been possible except by the deliberate permission and assistance of the Manager of the world. Yet these scientific advancements must have been planned and timed for our day. If all our modern discoveries had been mastered two thousand years ago, by the Greeks and the Romans, and if the harmful discoveries and inventions had kept pace with the good, it is a question whether the race would not long ere this have been practically wiped off the face of the earth by mutual destruction.

It would seem that the chief reason, perhaps the only one, for God's allowing a greatly increased knowledge of nature to develop in modern times, is as a preparation for the closing up of the cosmic experiment of sin. Daniel the prophet declared that in "the time of the end" knowledge would "be increased." Daniel 12:4. It would seem necessary to arrange for some easily comprehended, universal test to be brought before all the race of mankind, preliminary to the close of human probation. This would make necessary the outward unification of the race, so all mankind would become like one big community, where all are acquainted with everything that goes on. Under such conditions the laws of mob psychology come into play with sinister augury, the mob in this case being the whole world, where the instantaneous news of the telegraph and the radio provide for this mob's being whipped up into some wild hysteria against God and His people, as has so often occurred on a small scale all down the trail of history.

VIII

That there are visible indications of some such condition soon to confront the world, few will venture to deny. The world of mankind has indeed become one community; every part is in direct communication with every other part; and already we have seen the partial illustration of how the world mob will behave under the stimulus of some hysterical obsession which acts on the passions or the interests of the great majority. Under the abnormal conditions of this world-mob psychology we may see people lose their individuality and their common sense, and see them hurried into wild, cruel behavior which the individuals alone would never do under the calmness of individual decision.

It is in this way that the majority has often in the past become a violently persecuting power, wreaking indignant punishment on any small minority which presumes to stand out against the decrees of the crowd. And in the final world crisis, when God the Creator is reining all the world up for a decision between right and wrong, the great majority will be almost certain to take the wrong side; and then, because of the intolerant spirit of an excited crowd, they will seek to crush out all dissent, all expression of contrary opinion or contrary action.

It may well be thus that the entire world will be brought to make a final decision over some simple, clear issue which the Creator has chosen as the final test of the loyalty of mankind. The mechanical inventions which help to bring all mankind into one vast community are rapidly making possible such a cosmic showdown, where the people who are resolved to remain loyal to the Creator will be on one side; but because of the mob spirit of intolerance this small minority may become objects of hatred and oppression. And

the onlooking Creator, seeing the situation, may decide that it is about time to end the whole experiment, since His loyal people are again being treated in the same way in which He Himself was treated when He failed to conform to the prejudices and the fanatical religiousness of the Jewish authorities of His day.

We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling—
To be living is sublime.
Hark! the waking up of nations,
Gog and Magog to the fray;
Hark! what soundeth? Is creation
Groaning for her latter day?

. . . . .

Wicked spirits gather round thee,
Legions of those foes to God—
Principalities most mighty—
Walk unseen the earth abroad;
They are gathering to the battle,
Strengthened for the last deep strife;
Christian, arm! be watchful, ready,
Struggle manfully for life.

The present world-wide repudiation of the Biblical doctrine of creation for the supposedly "scientific" theory of evolution can hardly fail to strike the thoughtful man or woman as of profound importance for these last days. This situation can scarcely be a haphazard occurrence, nor is the time of its spread over the earth a matter of no significance. And it is now easy to understand how the Sabbath, the official memorial of a real creation, and thus a divinely appointed protest against all false ideas about the origin of the world

and of the human race, may very probably become one of the chief means of distinguishing the ones who are determined to remain loyal to their Creator.

While the final chapter in the history of mankind will doubtless be somewhat as set forth in the foregoing paragraphs, we must not be too dogmatic about some of the many details; since the predictive prophecies of the Scriptures are couched in highly figurative language, which has often been misunderstood in the past, and may be so misunderstood again. Seldom has anyone or any class of men been able to interpret successfully the details of prophecies in advance. Yet we shall be safe personally if we follow the line of duty, in the light of all that the Lord has given us in the way of instructions. Only thus can we hope to be safe now or can we hope to be protected from the delusions and deceptions which will finally take vast multitudes of humanity captive.

Not now, my child,—a little more rough tossing,
A little longer on the billow's foam;
A few more journeyings in the desert darkness,
And then the sunshine of thy Father's home.

Chapter IX

THE COSMIC COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Of course, as the creator of all things, as the active manager of the electrons and protons, the atoms and molecules of which all are composed, you will not only know the inmost thoughts of all your intelligent beings, but will also have an accurate record of every being who has ever lived. No general judgment of either men or angels will be at all necessary to inform you of the status of everyone. The real Creator must know exactly the character of everyone; and no such procedure as that of a final judgment would be needful, so far as He Himself is concerned.

And yet a general assize will be essential on other grounds for the final settlement of the affairs of the universe. You don't want this rebellion to drag out to unreasonable lengths of time; yet on the other hand you are determined that the business of settling it must be managed in such a manner that no such trouble will ever appear again. In a great community of free intelligent beings, such as the universe has become, public opinion cannot be flouted, except at the expense of the contentment and happiness of all; and in this matter of the great rebellion you must needs carry the public opinion of the universe with you in every step that you take in settling it.

But you have already made some progress. For generation after generation during many thousands of years you have been selecting out of the mutineers a few loyal, steadfast ones, until finally you have a sufficient number with

which to repopulate this speck of a world. By the catastrophic events connected with the second coming of Christ and the end of the world, you have stopped the further multiplication of the human race, and all the rebels are now resting in the sleep of death until such time as it is decided what is to be done with them. You have salvaged a large number of men and women who, you are confident, can be depended upon never to raise any further trouble in your universe; and these have now been granted immortal life, a life which henceforth will measure with your own, through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

But what about Lucifer and his band of rebel angels? What is to be done with them? Besides, there are many human beings lying dead on the earth who in life were very little behind the demon angels in their guilt of violent warfare against justice and goodness. Others of the dead, however, were not so guilty. Are they all to be treated alike? Some of the most guilty of men, indeed, were lauded and pampered by their fellows during their entire lives, and even in death their praises kept ringing down the corridors of history. Is no readjustment of values demanded in view of such flagrant miscarriages of justice and truth? Can the public opinion of the community of the surviving righteous be satisfied with leaving the results of human history in this highly unsatisfactory state?

What is to be done about it all? Many millions of those who have been saved know little or nothing about the individual histories of those who have been rejected and are now lying in the sleep of death. Practically nobody of the righteous human beings has the slightest idea of the relative guilt of the individual rebel angels. Are they all to be treated alike? Will the community of the righteous ones surviving

be satisfied with this indefiniteness and this lack of information?

One of your leading aims in allowing the whole affair of the cosmic rebellion to be dragged out for these thousands of years is to provide for the mental security and peace of all the intelligences who survive, so that no doubt or suspicion, no whisper of discontent or jealousy, will ever arise a second time. Would it not seem that such an insurance against future possibility of trouble will best be attained by making all the records of the entire history of sin so vivid in their warning lessons, so conclusive and complete in their coverage of all possible contingencies, so clear in their apportionment of blame and guilt to every lost one, human and demon alike, that no occasion for suspicion or discontent can ever again arise during the ages of the future? To accomplish these purposes the heavenly archives must become a bureau of source material for the study of all moral and religious problems; and the individual records of the angels and of mankind on the earth must become the lesson books of the universe, probably permanent sources of reference for evermore.

But the cosmic criminals who all down the ages have been such a source of pain and perplexity must have their cases settled forever. They comprise two general classes: the rebel angels, who are still alive and awaiting their sentences; and the wicked human beings, who are now lying in the sleep of death, but whose individual cases must be adjusted according to their individual deserts. And it is the loyal subjects who survive that must become informed about all these cases, and who must be satisfied about the justice of the final disposition that you make of all these cases.

All this is the real reason for a final or general judgment, because the fate or "punishment" which you may feel obliged to mete out to all these rebels must be such as will appeal to the good sense and justice of all those whom you have decided to keep alive throughout eternity. You have endowed every one of them with reason and a sense of justice akin to your own; and all your methods of handling the great cosmic rebellion must be such as will forever win the admiration and honest support of all the intelligences throughout the universe. Most of the loyal men and women will assuredly have intimate friends among the lost, perhaps many close relatives; and these loyal ones will need to be fully satisfied with the management of the cases of those who have proved unfit to be trusted with immortal life.

Let me repeat: The cosmic criminals among the angels are awaiting their sentences; also the vast host of unredeemed men and women are lying in the storage of the grave awaiting a final call by means of a resurrection, whenever it is settled what to do with them.

All these problems can be attained only by some system of a general judgment.

II

If we go back a little in our story, we shall find that there is really one other matter which must be settled first. At the end of the age of human history, exactly at the second coming of Christ, all the loyal people then living will be rescued bodily and taken away from this earth to share in eternal life. Along with them are the righteous of all the ages past, who are raised from their graves at this same time and who also become immortal and share in the reward of endless life.

Now it is evident that something in the way of a *preliminary* judgment must have been carried on *previous to this time,* that is, *previous to the second coming.* This means that this preliminary judgment must have been carried on while people were living and conducting business as usual on the earth, in the closing days of earth's history.

Naturally, you as the creator must be the one to decide who are thus qualified for eternal life. For you are the one who will have to put up with them; you will have to be sure that their natures are such as can get along together in harmony and good fellowship; and they will need to be such beings as you will not get tired of supplying constantly with an ever-renewed endowment of physical and mental energy. For it is unthinkable that any created being can ever outgrow his absolute dependence upon his creator.

There can be no danger of any blame coming back on you from these people for having given them life. Everyone thus selected for endless life will naturally be thankful and satisfied for being thus chosen. And we are assuming that you will select only such ones as will be able to get along harmoniously in your new world, without any troubles or disagreeable incidents.

But the large number of loyal angels who have never given any trouble must naturally have something to say in these matters. They also must be satisfied with the credentials of those human beings who are to be granted endless life. These loyal angels are original or charter members, as it were; and they will have to put up with all the peculiar individualities of the human beings rescued from this earth, and will have to put up with them throughout eternity. Inevitably these loyal angels will have to be allowed to pronounce on the case of every single individual who is to be

admitted into the circle of God's permanent family. And all this must involve an actual judgment session, a preliminary investigation before the loyal angels as a grand jury, to decide who are to be admitted to the permanent family of the universe.

Such a preliminary investigation of multitudes of individual cases must necessarily involve a considerable time. And decisions in all these cases must have been reached *before* the second coming of Christ and the first resurrection. Afterward, those who are selected in this preliminary investigation, together with the original loyal angels, will have to act as a committee of the whole to decide the destiny of the rest, all the reprobates.

Thus there will really have to be *two* judgments: first a preliminary one to pick out those who are to have a part in what the Bible calls "the first resurrection;" and next a judgment by the committee of the whole, who will have to perform the sad and delicate work of settling the destiny of all those who have not succeeded in proving worthy of eternal life.

III

But the fate of every individual will require an absolutely unanimous verdict. There can be no lumping of numerous individuals together, and deciding about them en masse. Nor can there be any mere majority vote by the jurors. No single case must ever be carried over in the memory of anyone as unsatisfactorily settled, to become a source of doubt or regret through the coming aeons. All the foul seeds of discontent and uncertainty regarding your methods as creator and manager of the universe, must be forever and completely eradicated. Not a solitary case must be left over

which has not been examined and decided to the full and absolute satisfaction of all.

And all these matters can best be decided while the rebels are safely away in the storage of the grave. In this *status in quo* they cannot be accumulating further guilt; their records are easily available and are without ambiguity; and plenty of time is available for careful investigations and permanent decisions.

The Scriptures picture this cosmic committee of the whole as holding their sessions *between the two resurrections,* these being represented as a thousand years apart. We have every reason for taking this as a literal period of time. But common sense tells us that all the decisions regarding the fate of the reprobates must be reached while they are still in the *status in quo* of the grave awaiting the verdict. Lucifer and his demon angels are spoken of as "bound" during these same thousand years; for they are evidently limited to this desolated earth, with nothing to do but feel the pangs of hopeless remorse and look forward to an inevitable fate. When the cases of all are finally settled, then the rebels can be brought forth to receive their sentence and to suffer their doom.

Herein we see the justice and the common sense of this method of death (which the Scriptures plainly call a "sleep") while awaiting their sentence. Each of the loyal ones has had an advocate to represent him and to plead his case. But these rebels have neglected to employ the only advocate available; they have no one to offer security for their future good behavior at the great assize. Nevertheless they are entitled to full and impartial justice. And when a verdict has been reached by this committee of the whole which can stand through all eternity, then only will it be time to raise

the sleeping rebels from the dead in the second resurrection, which Christ Himself calls a "resurrection of damnation."

IV

What methods will be employed to bring all the details of individual cases to the attention of the angels and men on this large committee we have not been told. The Bible speaks of "books." Within human experience men have made and used many kinds of books. Clay tablets, also carvings on stone, seem to have served mankind for many centuries. Skins of animals were later employed. In more modern times we have used sheets of cellulose specially prepared.

But our phonograph records are as truly "books" in all the essential meanings of the word. And they have the further advantage of being impartial records of actual facts, though they are limited to one kind of record, one made by sound waves. The human equation of prejudice and other inaccuracies is eliminated in the taking of a phonograph record. But who can doubt that the King of the universe will have other and infinitely better methods of recording, not merely from sounds and from light, but from those other forms of radiation which we in our ignorance call "ether waves," even the thoughts and intents of the heart? At any rate, from faithful and adequate records, such as God Himself can devise, will every rebel finally be judged.

We are all familiar with the statement that thoughts dwelt upon become acts; acts when repeated crystallize into habits; habits form character; and character decides destiny.

In Jean Ingelow's poem "Divided," we have a picture of two friends on opposite banks of a tiny rivulet across which they may clasp hands. They walk along in the direc-

tion in which the stream is flowing. The rivulet becomes a brook, the brook a river; finally the river becomes a mighty estuary across which no voice can be heard.

> But two are walking apart forever,
> And wave their hands for a mute farewell.

This illustrates how seemingly insignificant choices may decide our destiny for eternity.

All mature human beings embody in their tissues an objective record of all the mental and spiritual experiences through which they have passed. Were we wise enough, we might read this record, and thus become aware of the bent of the character, the actual moral and intellectual state of the individual, what he really *is* or has become. For choices register themselves as tissue changes in the brain and nerve centers; these tissue changes go on and accumulate in certain well-defined directions; until finally the character has a set or maturity (either for good or for evil), which anyone wise enough might easily read from the brain and nerve ganglia; though of course the facilities for doing this would need to be ultramicroscopic and chemical, also perhaps (though not necessarily) what we might term "miraculous."

Our police records embody thumb- and fingerprints. These do not change during even a long lifetime, and the records of many millions of individuals are always distinct, no two being exactly alike. But these are minor records compared with those spoken of above. The God of heaven has an infinitely better permanent record of our lives in the tissues of our brain and nerve complexes. And we may well believe that the "born-again" individual is in some vital respect radically different from what he was before. When heavenly "photostatic copies" of these character rec-

ords are brought out for the objective inspection of the assembled universe, when these moral fingerprints are read and evaluated by the committee of the whole, and when finally to these are added the impartial record of all the deeds of the earthly life, it is obvious that a just and impartial verdict can be rendered. And such a verdict will have been arrived at on a strictly scientific and judicial basis, a basis not of opinion or of emotional prejudice, but of objective fact.

And the crucial acts or choices which ultimately fixed the destiny will be seen in their true setting; also the many character-indicating acts or words during all the life will come under examination. All these help to become the objective indices of the moral condition of the soul, a sort of moral thermometer reading, revealing the moral and spiritual temperature. But in addition to these records of words and deeds, it is the general set or bent of the life, the sum total of the resultant character, which decides one's fitness for life or death, the destiny for weal or woe.

> No action, whether foul or fair,
> Is ever done, but it leaves somewhere
> A record, written by fingers ghostly,
> As a blessing or a curse, and mostly
> In the greater weakness or greater strength
> Of the acts which follow it; till at length
> The wrongs of ages are redressed,
> And the justice of God made manifest.
> —*Henry W. Longfellow.*

Finally, we must believe that the rebels themselves, after their resurrection, will in some way be brought to pronounce judgment on themselves, and will openly acknowledge that their exclusion from heaven is just. They come to realize

that they could not be happy in the presence of others so entirely different in character; and they would render that place anything but an abode of peace and joy. Each lost one can say as did Byron's Manfred to the fiend who tormented his dying hours: "I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey; but was my own destroyer."

The hopeless, self-generated misery of all those who are finally lost is well pictured by John Milton, who puts these words into the mouth of the fallen Lucifer:

> Which way shall I fly
> Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
> Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
> To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.

Thus the final verdict which decides the destiny of the rebels will be based on their own unfitness for the companionship of good and righteous beings. Their deformed characters would render them miserable themselves, and a source of misery and discord to all others, should they be given immortality and admitted to the companionship of beings so completely different from themselves. And before the final execution of their doom, these inescapable facts will be seen and acknowledged by the lost ones themselves, thus vindicating the Creator as having acted wisely and justly.

Chapter X

WAS IT ALL WORTH WHILE?

Doubtless all the human beings who survive will vote that it has been well worth while. They will say that heaven is cheap at any cost. That is, so far as anything that they may have suffered or endured, heaven with immortal life will seem well worth while. The angels also who survive will doubtless have a similar opinion.

But will this be true for the universe as a whole? I mean, will it be really worth while for the Creator to have incurred the frightful risk involved in creating moral beings—many millions of them—with the endowment of free choice, with the absolute freedom of raising a rebellion against their Creator?

We have seen in a brief way the enormous wastage involved. For many thousands of years, sin, pain, wretchedness, and indescribable misery have prevailed among countless millions of the human race. And finally uncounted millions of poor beings have had to be consigned to endless death, to eternal extinction.

If the Creator from the beginning, with all these contingencies before Him like an open book, thought that this inevitable risk was worth while, surely we with our finite knowledge ought to agree that it must be really so. We are but May flies sporting out our little ephemeral day of life; how can we correctly estimate the larger affairs of the universe? It would be wise to take the estimate of the only Being who really knows.

At the present time, with our meager knowledge, colossal

ignorance, and biased viewpoint, we may have to take this estimate largely on faith. Often the things of time and sense loom so large that the future seems of little account; a silver dollar held to the eye may obscure a hundred million suns. Moreover, at the present stage of the cosmic business we cannot see even the logic of some phases of these matters at all clearly; we cannot see why so many millions of both angels and men should have lost all in the great game of life. Nor can we recognize positively why an ultimate universe of free, happy intelligences could not have been possible without all this wastage and wreckage of innumerable millions.

The sacrifice of the innocent Son of God is also for many a dark problem. Why should the acting Creator and Manager of the universe feel Himself obliged to lay aside His position and His power, descend to the arena of sin and misery, and as man's substitute endure a shameful and cruel death? Was there no other way that infinite wisdom and justice could devise except this, in order to settle the cosmic controversy that had started among the citizens of heaven?

This too we must now take largely on faith. We cannot see all the aspects of the case; we cannot see all the issues and the contingencies involved. But we can say that this amazing plan of salvation has actually accomplished its designed results; namely, that of winning over great numbers of men and women who were formerly in open rebellion. And doubtless these problems will gradually clear up to our minds in the future state.

So, when that morn of endless light is waking,
And shades of evil from its splendors flee,
Safe may we rise, this earth's dark vale forsaking,
Through all the long, bright day to dwell with Thee.

II

But here in our present mundane state we cannot get our eyes away from the many millions who seem to have lost out in everything that would qualify them for eternal life. It certainly would not look fair if all these unfortunate or rebellious millions must be kept in some cosmic pesthouse or torture chamber for all eternity. They were not asked about being brought into existence. They might reasonably be consigned to oblivion, if they did not prove satisfactory or fit to live with the rest of the universe. Their loss of everything worth while would seem to be sad enough. It might be justified as a sort of cosmic health measure, necessitated as a precaution against the further spread of the moral infection of sin. But how would it be fair to consign them to a cosmic torture chamber for ages without end? Is it conceivable that the Creator, in giving them life in the first place, started something that He could not stop, and that they must live eternally because they lived once?

Some theologians have tried to minimize the horrors of an eternally burning "hell" by saying that in reality it is a small place, a limited locality, so far as the rest of the universe is concerned. But no theological quibbling has ever succeeded in reconciling such a condition of never-ending misery with the goodness and innate benevolence of a wise Creator. Every chamber of horrors that I have visited in the Old World—and I have seen several—might be called a small place; but I do not think that this fact tended to minimize the impression made upon the mind of every visitor, that the men who planned and ran such places were nothing short of tyrants and fiends. And all our reason and sense of fair play would have to pronounce the same opinion of the Creator, if He from all eternity planned a universe in

which even a small and obscure compartment would, for an eternity, be devoted to housing millions on millions of beings whom their Creator could not mercifully put out of existence..

Strange too, isn't it? that the people who are most certain of this eternal cosmic pesthouse are always those who are perfectly confident that they themselves will never go there. As Paul Laurence Dunbar expressed it:

> There is a heaven, forever, day by day,
> The upward longing of my soul doth tell me so.
> There is a hell, I'm quite as sure; for, pray,
> If there were not, where would my neighbors go?

No; nothing of the kind will survive to mar the perfect peace and joy of the redeemed. No moral pesthouse or cosmic prison will remain as a horrible hang-over from the sad but instructive incident in the history of the universe which we know as the experience of sin.

In the preceding pages we have studied the affairs of the universe from the point of view of modern scientific enlightenment and sanctified reason and common sense. But in such a scheme of a good and rational creation, there can be no such cosmic nightmare as this of an eternal torture chamber. The latter doesn't make any kind of sense along with the idea of a wise and benevolent Creator.

The highest reason and enlightenment assures us that the Creator must have planned from the first to have a clean, joyous, rationally conducted universe. Even now it must be the case that He can view the ultimate outcome with composure and joy. Seeing the end from the beginning, He can even look upon the present welter of sin and misery without one pang of sorrow for having created angels and

men. Instead He sees the possibilities to which His creatures may attain. It was because of all this that He came at such an infinite cost to bring about the redemption of mankind.

III

In the larger, the truer view of life and its meaning, we see that the present is but a prelude to the life hereafter. What are fifty, or seventy, or even a hundred years of this troubled earthly life, as compared with the endless vistas of uncounted millions of ages which will stretch out before us in the future state? In this respect, the present life may fittingly be regarded as merely the embryonic form of the real life of human beings, their real mature existence beginning with the resurrection. As the skilled embryologist, with the aid of the right kind of instruments, might be supposed to be capable of forecasting from an examination of the human embryo or fetus all the chief physical characteristics of the individual into which it would have developed, so the Creator, with His perfect knowledge of all that He has created, must know accurately from the present or embryonic form shown in this life, exactly what sort of character it will develop into in the future state. To Him the mere physical form is immaterial; He is concerned with ethics, with character. And He will decide the destiny and the employment of every individual according to the bent of the character indicated in this embryonic or prenatal state which we term the present probationary life on earth.

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.
—*John G. Whittier.*

IV

The highest graces of oratory and poetry have been requisitioned to portray the beauties and the delights of the future state. These are good and useful in their proper place. It will be more appropriate for us, however, to set down in sober, unadorned language of objective fact what we have been assured about this future life, or what we have a right to expect about it from reasoning upon the data we possess.

1. The future will be as real and as objectively matter-of-fact as is the present. The earthly stage of trial or probation will then be past, the entrance or matriculation test will be over, and out before us will stretch the rich and varied occupations of the heavenly school. Our field of study will be the limitless universe; our Teacher, the Creator Himself. The Eden life of our first parents was a kindergarten department which was interrupted by the tragedy of sin. But when the human race has at last graduated out of its long probation, the larger and higher education will be resumed in the deathless Eden of the hereafter.

Large are the mansions in our Father's dwelling,
Glad are those homes that sorrows never dim;
Sweet are the harps in holy music swelling,
Soft are the tones that raise the heavenly hymn.

There, like an Eden blossoming in gladness,
Bloom the fair flowers by earth so rudely pressed;
Come unto Him all ye who droop in sadness,
"Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

But there are important differences. Not only has death been left behind; but there will be no haunting fear of mistakes, no wayward impulses to wrong, no possibility of remorse or fear. All who are there have developed a perfect immunity to evil in all its forms; and thus the acquisition of knowledge and the development of mind, the acquirement of skill and experience in all worthy employments, may be carried forward without any of the handicaps which have marred our progress here.

2. Without doubt our senses of sight and of hearing will be vastly increased and perfected. We may not even need such scientific crutches as our microscopes and telescopes, but may without these mechanical assistants study that world of beauty among the minute forms of life, or that other far-flung glory of the sidereal heavens. From all these phases of the universe as well as from ourselves the blight due to sin has been forever removed; there are no confusing elements of evil in earth, or sea, or sky, nothing to perplex us with the suggestion that it cannot be quite what the Creator intended it to be. The music of nature's sublime oratorios will not be marred by minor chords of lament or sorrow; but the infinite possibilities of joy and delight will be developed with nothing to remind us of the discords and jangles of this world of disappointments and frustrations.

3. Even in this life the student of history may gain some understanding of the causes behind the vast complications of human events. But his own vision is clouded, and his sources of information are fragmentary, partial, and biased; so that he cannot read aright even those events which lie directly under his own observation.

In the future life all these obstacles will be removed. His own innate tendencies to bias or prejudice have been out-

grown. The infinite archives supply him with sources objectively accurate and unmarred by human passion or pride. The entire scope of human history is available for his study. He can trace the varied ways in which the prince of evil sought to counteract the plans and work of God for the uplifting of mankind, only to meet with defeat at every turn. And all this despite the fact that Lucifer could employ tricks and methods of falsehood which the Eternal could not use. God could never coerce the will or the conscience; while Lucifer never stopped at any employment of force or outrage to attain his temporary object. These crooked methods of the prince of darkness were often highly successful for long periods of time; it sometimes seemed as if truth and equity had been effectually banished from the life of man. But in the end the ways of the Eternal always triumphed; the plans and policies of evil were ultimately shown to be without excuse or defense. And all these historical epics will be made available to the cosmic student, to become the source of instruction and of rejoicing throughout the future of the universe.

> With liberty and endless time to read
> The libraries of heaven.

4. Each of the redeemed will be able to gain untainted information by personal acquaintance with the angels. Especially will it be a high privilege for one to hold open conversation with his own guardian angel, the one who watched over him from his earliest moments, who guided and protected him from a thousand perils and mistakes, who was by his side in death and was the first to greet him in the resurrection morning. What a transcendent joy will it be

to have him recount all the varied providences of our lives, and to realize the divine care from beginning to end!

5. We shall not cease to be human, even when we have discarded mortality and have become partakers of the divine nature. The loves and sympathies of our souls have been implanted by God; and they will find their highest and fullest exercise through our personal fellowship with the unfallen angels, and with the loyal followers of God gathered from all the ages of history and all the conditions of earthly life.

6. Without the handicap of weariness, without the discouragement of frustrated plans and disappointed hopes, we shall all become enthusiastic students of the wonders of God's created works, and of every worth-while form of study and research. In this life we find true joy in carrying out projects; and in doing them we attain experience and development. There is every reason to believe that these same laws of growth and attainment will continue throughout the future life, with no limiting barriers and no closed doors to shut us out from any legitimate form of enterprise.

It is also obvious that in mental attainments as in character we shall begin the future life where we left off here. Hence in every phase of true education we shall take with us all the worth-while knowledge and skills which we have gathered in this life. Happy will be he who does not find himself saved "as by fire," with much useless mental equipment which he must discard or unlearn, and only a scanty store that he can make use of in the studies and enterprises of the immortal state.

7. It is reasonable to suppose that all the resources of the universe will be open to the examination and firsthand study of the loyal children of this earth. What will it be to

visit other worlds, to share in the accumulated wisdom of other beings who have never fallen into sin, and who have been studying the wonders of God's universe for ages, with none of the handicaps and limitations of earth's poor mortal lot! Throughout the limitless vistas of sidereal space we may journey without haste, without the need of rest or of a renewal of supplies; and throughout the entire universe we shall admire the wisdom of one Mind, the effectiveness and power of one Will, the faithfulness and love of one Father of all.

Sin and sinners have disappeared. The entire universe is clean, beautiful, and happy. The Eternal One is universally recognized as not only the original source of all beings and objective entities, but also as the never-ceasing, the never-wearied fountain of all energy, all life, all joy. And with one voice will all His creatures declare that God's plans of wisdom and mercy for the universe have been well worth while.